

Israel reassured over U.S. aid

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel has received reassurances from ultra-conservative Republican Senator Jesse Helms that it will be spared cuts in U.S. foreign aid, Tel Aviv's ambassador to Washington said Wednesday. Iamar Rabinovich told Israel radio that Mr. Helms had explained to him that Israel was "a special case." Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was due to start a 10-day visit to North America later Wednesday. Talks are scheduled with President Bill Clinton on Monday but Mr. Rabin is also due to see Republican leaders buoyant from their landslide victory in elections last week. Mr. Rabinovich said Mr. Helms told him he differentiated between foreign aid and aid to Israel. "Israel renders great service to the United States in the Middle East and that translates into the granting of funds," Mr. Rabinovich quoted Mr. Helms as saying. "I am convinced that American officials will understand that keeping American aid at its current level is important for Israel's security and for the continuation of the peace process," Mr. Rabinovich said. Israel enjoys annual U.S. aid of \$3 billion.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Settlers threaten to mine settlements

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israelis living in the occupied territories are considering mining settlements as part of "active resistance" to any bid to evacuate them, their leaders said Wednesday. "We will not limit ourselves to passive resistance as we did during the evacuation of the Sinai in 1982," said Nissim Slomoniensky, "mayor" of Alkana on the West Bank. "Several options have been suggested — mining access roads, anchoring mobile homes with concrete and forcing out Arabs from their villages in reprisal." He vowed mass demonstrations and if necessary "operations carried out by a hard core" to prevent the dismantling of settlements. "Every day we get offers of help from right wing militants," the mayor said. "They include former soldiers from elite units who sleep with a gun under their mattresses and some hotheads who are difficult to control." But he stressed that "at no cost would they open fire on soldiers and spill Israeli blood." An army spokesman refused to comment on the statement. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has refused to take down settlements during Palestinian autonomy, in line with the declaration of principles.

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Christians seek 'genuine dialogue'

LIMASSOL (R) — A senior Christian leader Wednesday urged a "genuine dialogue" between the Middle East's churches and the region's dominant Muslims to overcome tensions whipped up by the Islamic renaissance. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, stressed that "addressing issues raised by what is often depicted as 'an Islamic revival' is central" in a Christian-Muslim dialogue. "To be sure, a genuine dialogue can no longer overlook inter-communal tensions," he added. Mr. Raiser was addressing the inaugural session of a week-long ecumenical assembly of the Cyprus-based Middle East Council of Churches. Throughout the Middle East, minority Christians are on the retreat and churches have reported an alarming decline in numbers due to emigration to the West.

Egyptian flood losses at least \$74m

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak said on Wednesday losses in floods earlier this month that killed almost 600 people came to at least \$74 million. "The losses cost the state between 250 million Egyptian pounds (\$73.7 million) and 300 million Egyptian pounds (\$88.5 million) and we have received foreign aid of 60 million pounds (\$17.7 million) only," Mr. Mubarak told reporters.

Gulf deputies to cooperate

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwaiti deputies and members of consultative councils of the five other Gulf Arab monarchies ended a four-day meeting here Wednesday aimed at promoting coordination, the first such meeting of deputies. In a joint statement, the participants praised "the achievements by the leaders of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to boost cooperation... within Islamic Sharia (law)." The meeting in Kuwait City, which opened Sunday, was the first of its kind since the creation of the GCC in 1981.

Masked men wound Palestinian

TULKARM (AFP) — Masked gunmen shot and seriously wounded a Palestinian Wednesday in Tulkarm in the north of the occupied West Bank, witnesses said. Two masked men went into a shop owned by Khaled Sweif, 38, in the town's old market, and shot him at point-blank range. Sweif was injured in the legs and stomach. Some witnesses said the attackers were Israeli soldiers from a special unit, dressed in civilian clothes.

Rebel Muslim forces enter Bihac pocket

SARAJEVO (R) — Rebel Muslims have infiltrated the besieged enclave of Bihac to fight the Sarajevo government army defending the pocket against a Serb assault, a U.N. spokesman said Wednesday. "It is looking clearer there have been two crossings by Abdic forces," said Colonel Tim Spicer. Some 30,000 rebel Muslims, loyal to the deposed warlord Fikret Abdic, sought refuge in Serb-held Croatia after their revolt was crushed in August (see related stories inside).

Spain's king, queen leave Saudi Arabia

DUBAI (R) — King Juan Carlos of Spain and Queen Sofia left Saudi Arabia on Wednesday after a one-day visit to the kingdom, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

U.N. council describes Iraq's recognition of Kuwait as 'significant'

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Security Council on Wednesday welcomed Iraq's formal recognition of Kuwait, following three days of haggling that revealed divisions over its significance in eventually easing sanctions. "The members of the council welcome this development, which they consider to be a significant step in the direction towards the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions," said a statement read at a formal meeting by U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, the current council president.

"They will follow closely Iraq's implementation of this decision. They will also continue to keep under review Iraq's action to complete its compliance with all relevant Security Council resolutions," the statement added. Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz on Monday presented Ms. Albright with documents showing Iraq had recognised Kuwait as an independent state within borders specified by the United Nations last year. Iraq had taken the action last Thursday.

Recognition of Kuwait's borders was considered central by all 15 council members as closing a chapter in Iraq's contention that Kuwait was its 19th province and therefore justifying the invasion of the emirate.

Russia and France, who favour more movement towards an eventual lifting of the arms embargo, had wanted the statement read while the council was reviewing sanctions Monday. They believe recognition of Kuwait along with fulfilling requirements of all weapons demands should be sufficient for lifting the oil embargo sometime next year while the United States and Britain say other demands must be met. Iraq's Foreign Minister

Mohammad Said Al Sahaf said Wednesday his country had overcome the hardest part in its fight for the lifting of the U.N. sanctions.

"Iraq has come through the difficult phase and is on its way to breaking the plot," said Mr. Sahaf, quoted by the official Iraqi News Agency (INA).

He credited "Iraqi patience and the wise leadership of President Saddam Hussein" for progress.

The foreign minister predicted that the sanctions "will be lifted partially at an initial stage, to allow Iraq to export its raw materials like oil, phosphate, sulphur and dates."

"The next step will be lifting the other forms of the blockade on all imports needed for our industry," he added, without specifying a date for a possible easing of sanctions.

Mr. Sahaf accused "imperialism of having planned to make Iraq disappear" and of "having used the U.N. Security Council to fulfill its plot."

He repeated that Baghdad was not detaining any prisoners of war from Kuwait or other countries. Kuwait has charged that Iraq took several hundred prisoners during its seven-month occupation of the emirate.

Meanwhile two Kuwaiti women missing since 1991 have returned home from Iraq with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the ICRC in Baghdad said.

"The ICRC facilitated today, through the border post of Safwan, the return of two Kuwaiti women from Iraq to Kuwait," the statement said.

The statement did not identify the women and did not say whether they were among a list of several hundred people the Kuwaiti authorities say are still held by Iraq.

President Saddam, in remarks published on Wednesday, said Iraq will carry on building palaces and other projects to infuriate the United States until "it dies of rancour."

The president's comments, carried by the official press, were made during a cabinet meeting. They were his harshest criticism of the United States since President Bill Clinton took office in 1993.

Baghdad newspapers said President Saddam was reacting to Ambassador Albright's accusation that he spends lavishly on palaces and presidential retreats while ordinary Iraqis suffer under four-year-old trade sanctions.

Ms. Albright produced satellite pictures of what she said were palaces and grand houses under construction in Iraq.

A report in the New York Times on Monday said a flurry of construction was expected to triple the number of residences for Iraq's elite and included construction of a presidential palace four times the size of the White House.

"We shall go on infuriating them (the United States and other enemies) with additional building, construction, culture and science, day after day... (until) our enemies die of grief, rancour and anguish," President Saddam said.

"The presidential palace is a great national symbol... other presidential sites are for the state and its official guests."

He said none of the palaces were owned by "Saddam Hussein."

Before embarking on such projects Iraq had repaired and rebuilt war-damaged bridges, power stations, refineries, dams, factories and communication centres, he

(Continued on page 7)



PRINCE HASSAN VISITS AL AL BAYT UNIVERSITY: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, president of the Royal Commission on AL al Bayt University, on Wednesday underlined that the university should be a meeting place of Islamic cultures and civilisations and should promote moderation to be able to participate with research and education centres in finding solutions and building the

future. At a meeting with AL al Bayt University teaching staff and students at the university, Prince Hassan called for contacts between peoples of the Islamic nation, stressing that "belonging to this nation requires contacts between its generations to preserve its achievements as well as protecting the dignity of all Muslim peoples" (Petra photo)

Crown Prince urges revival of Arab action based on new concepts

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Wednesday called for the revival of the idea of Arab collective action to be based on new concepts that take into consideration the recent world developments and serve the Arab Nation's highest interests.

In a lecture to senior Armed Forces officers, Prince Hassan said that the Arabs should welcome the idea of security and cooperation in the Middle East region as serving their own interests.

Jordanians and Palestinians, the Crown Prince said, have been integrated socially, culturally, politically and demographically over the past decades.

He said that Jordan continues to back the Palestinian people's efforts to regain their rights on their national soil and for this reason Jordan insisted that its peace treaty with Israel use the term "administrative" boundaries in referring to the borders with the West Bank.

Furthermore, Prince Hassan said, Jordan is keen on maintaining strong relations with the Palestinians and on offering the Kingdom as a "breathing lung" for the Palestinians.

Prince Hassan stressed that political opposition would continue to be practiced within the framework of democracy in the Kingdom.

He said Jordan hopes to see the whole region adopt-

ing political pluralism following in the footsteps of Jordan, which, he pointed out, continues to give due respect to human rights.

The Prince said that Jordan hopes that European nations would become partners with the Arabs in the process of development.

He said Europe's history provides a rich source on which the Arabs can draw and abounds with experience from which they can benefit.

His lecture was followed by a dialogue with the army officers over the economy, democracy, development and the role of the Jordanian Armed Forces in these affairs.

'Israeli state sanctions torture'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — An Israeli human rights group on Wednesday condemned a government decision to allow secret police to get tougher to exact confessions from Palestinian suspects and accused the government of permitting torture.

"The government is trying to widen the crack through which a legal cover can be given to torture," Yizhar Be'er, director of the human rights group Betselem, told a news conference.

Political sources said on Sunday that a cabinet committee, responding to the killing of more than 25 people by Palestinians since October, would relax restraints on the Shin Bet secret service for a three-month trial period.

Justice Minister David Libai, without referring to the specific Shin Bet guidelines, said this week: "The committee took a decision intended to strengthen the Shin Bet's ability to deal with the wave of terrorism."

Betselem, which monitors human rights in the occupied territories, concluded that the use of torture in interrogations was routine and no less prevalent since Israel and the Palestine Liberation

Organisation (PLO) signed a groundbreaking peace deal in 1993.

It called the news conference to issue a report on "Torture During Interrogation" from May to September this year, based on testimonies of Palestinian detainees and Israeli interrogators.

"Betselem has determined there is torture, Amnesty International has determined there is torture, the Red Cross has determined there is torture," said Yuval Ginbar, a co-author of the Betselem report.

He said it was unclear what the relaxation of restrictions would mean, telling reporters: "We will have information in a while, as testimonies start coming in from people on whom these methods are used."

"The habitual use of torture in the interrogation of Palestinians continues," said the study.

"Notwithstanding recent political developments, it is difficult to discern any improvement," he said. "Most (suspects) are subsequently released with being accused of anything."

"We appeal to the government not to succumb to terrorism, not to adopt its

ways," Mr. Ginbar told the press conference.

When an attack was believed imminent exceptions will now be allowed to 1987 Landau Commission rules which allow only "moderate physical pressure" against suspects, according to the Israeli press.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin hinted that the army would never have found the West Bank hideout of the kidnappers of a Jewish soldier last month if Shin Beth had followed the rules.

Mr. Ginbar questioned the "efficiency" of torture and the reliability of confessions extracted by force.

Betselem knew of cases where innocent Palestinians later joined extremist groups after being tortured.

"Hundreds of persons tortured — are released each year, bitter, frustrated and angry with all that might imply," he said.

The report again detailed numerous cases of beating, sleep and food deprivation, hoodings, confinement in closets, suspects tied to chairs or walls for prolonged periods.

Fawzi Mujahed, 21, from

(Continued on page 7)

Israeli delegation arrives today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An Israeli delegation headed by Uri Savir, the foreign ministry's secretary-general, is expected to arrive here on Thursday for talks on establishing diplomatic relations between Jordan and Israel and opening of embassies in Tel Aviv and Amman, officials said Wednesday.

The officials said it was too early to say when a formal announcement will be made of the establishment of the diplomatic relations but said the date would depend on Mr. Savir's discussions in Amman.

The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26 calls for the establishment of diplomatic ties within a month after the two countries formally ratify the treaty and exchange the documents of ratification.

His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin exchanged the documents of ratification of the treaty on Nov. 10, thus effectively setting Dec. 10 as the deadline for the establishment of diplomatic ties.

The officials said the Council of Ministers was studying nominations as ambassador to the Jordanian mission in Tel Aviv.

"The Cabinet has a list of names, but it is not known whether anyone has been selected yet," said a senior official.

Other sources said "there were ideas on" where to locate the Jordanian mission to Israel, but would not elaborate.

The Israeli embassy is expected to be located in the Abdoun area near the American mission. Reports that Israel had bought a piece of land and has started building could not be confirmed.

The Israeli foreign ministry official said in Tel Aviv on Wednesday that a high-level Israeli government delegation will include senior members of both Israel's foreign and finance ministries.

The sides will discuss joint projects, including some raised at last month's Middle East Economic Conference in Casablanca, he said. Israeli officials will also scout sites for an embassy in Amman, he said.

Meanwhile, the Sawt Al Shaab daily carried the first advertisement offering tours to Israel and the occupied territories to Jordanians.

Israeli tourists started coming in on Sunday across the southern and northern crossings. Jordan has set a limit of 550 Israelis allowed to come in daily, and only 150 of them will be allowed a day to visit the ancient rose-red city of Petra in the south.

Trade gets edge over rights in Clinton Jakarta visit

JAKARTA (Agencies) — U.S. President Bill Clinton on Wednesday bolstered trade and strategic cooperation with Indonesia but received nothing but a frosty response when he lobbied Jakarta on human rights.

His one-day official visit to Jakarta, following two days of talks among Asia-Pacific leaders, saw Mr. Clinton secure Indonesian support for his nuclear agreement with North Korea.

American businesses also won contracts on declarations of intent for trade worth some \$40 billion.

But Mr. Clinton ran smack into a stone wall when he pressed President Suharto to ease his grip on Indonesian dissidents and relax Jakarta's control over East Timor, the issue that marred the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Bogor on Tuesday.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher insisted

Mr. Clinton had been "firm and forceful" on the two moral issues.

Whatever Mr. Clinton's approach, it did not seem to soften Mr. Suharto, a tough president, whose 24-year tenure has spurred prosperity but also relentless criticism from human-rights groups.

"As sovereign and mature states, the United States and Indonesia do not have a similar view in all matters," Mr. Suharto told Mr. Clinton.

He also cold-shouldered Mr. Clinton's idea — sketched on Tuesday — that the people of East Timor, predominantly Roman Catholic in a mainly-Muslim country, gain some form of autonomy or self-government.

"There will be no special autonomy accorded to East Timor, in the sense of a different autonomy from that in other regions of our homeland," Mr. Suharto reportedly said.

He stressed that the trou-

bled enclave, annexed in 1976 to U.N. disapproval and named Indonesia's 27th province, was an "integral" part of national territory.

In parallel, Mr. Christopher and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown met with members of the National Human Rights Commission, a panel of pro-government and independent watchdogs set up by Mr. Suharto last year.

They discussed East Timor — an issue that triggered a sit-in by young protesters at the embassy compound and weekend rioting in Dili, the enclave's capital — as well as a government crackdown on an independent trade union, Sejahtera, and the closure of three weekly magazines, Editor, DeTik and Tempo.

Sources at the Clinton-Suharto summit said Mr. Clinton adopted a somewhat low-key approach, leaving his concern on human rights with stress on "partnership" and the convergence of U.S. and

Indonesian interests.

Mr. Clinton was headed next to Hawaii for several days of rest before returning to deal with tough political challenges at home.

As he prepared to leave Asia, Mr. Clinton reached out to Republicans — urging them to support both his market-opening moves with Asia and, more immediately, a new set of global trade liberalisation rules up for a vote next month in Congress.

"Only a few decisions by Congress have had the same capacity to show what we stand for and show where we are heading," Mr. Clinton told business group.

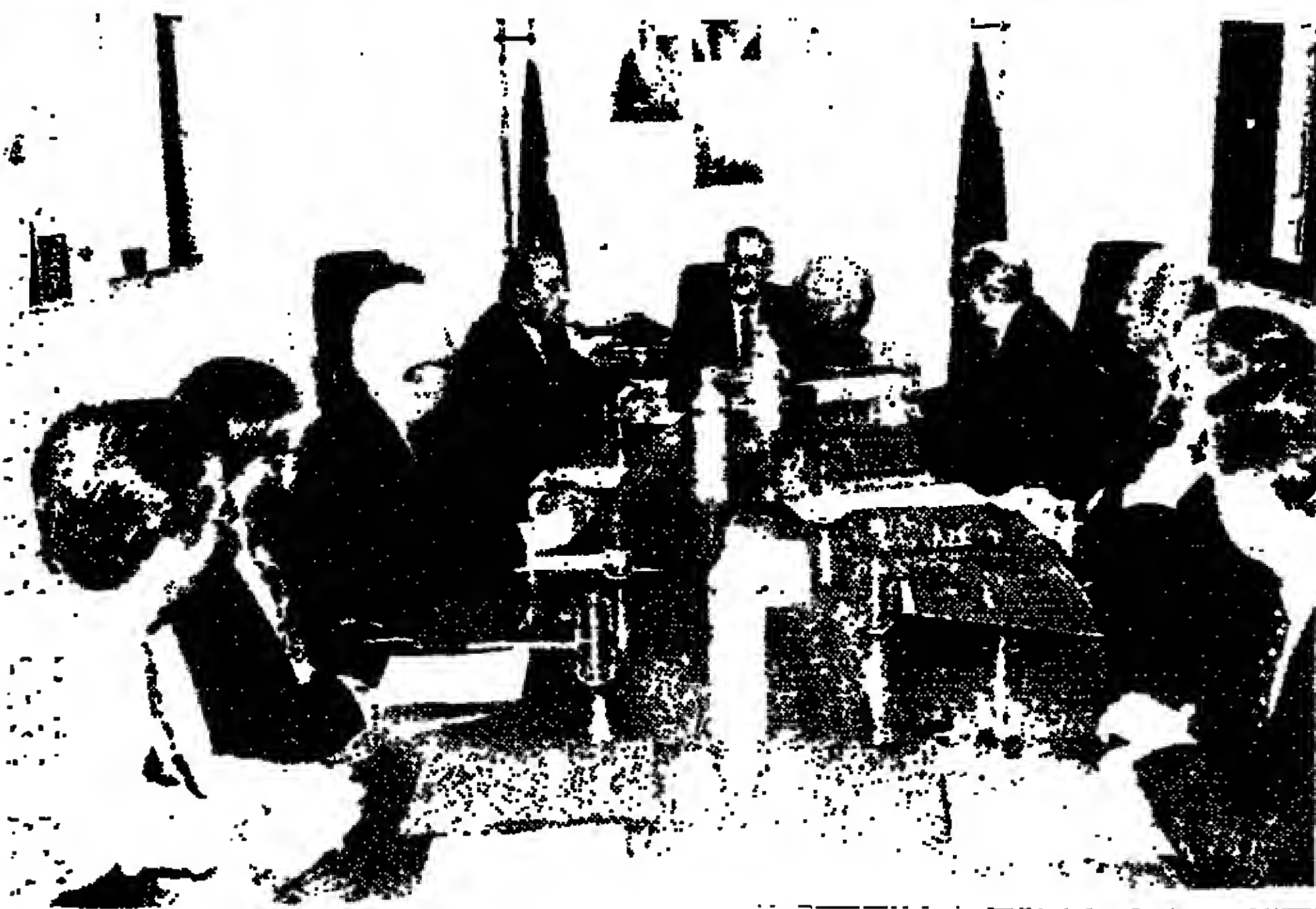
Some Republicans have urged that the vote on tariff-lowering General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) legislation be postponed until next year, when they will gain control of both chambers.

هكذا عند الأصل

Onion (green)	400/380
Onion (dry)	400/300
Orange	400/330
Pepper (hot)	650/500
Pepper (sweet)	260/160
Potato	260/160
Spinach	340/240
Tomato	280/180
String beans	500/300
	900/600

17:00	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	21:25	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
18:00	Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)	22:10	"Ja Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
18:25	London, BqPin (RJ)		
19:00	Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)	Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
19:05	Bangkok, Calcutta (GJ)	06:15	Beirut (ME)
19:10	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)	12:15	Doha (OZ)
20:00	Rome (RJ)	12:15	Sharjah (EK)
20:00	Athens, Larnaca (RJ)	14:00	Riyadh (SV)
20:50	Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)	17:15	Dubai (EK)
		21:00	Cairo (MS)
		02:20	Amsterdam (KL)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)			
11:05	Cairo (OZ)		
12:40	Sharjah (AH)		
13:00	Riyadh (SV)		
16:15	Dubai (EK)		
17:50	Paris, Damascus (AF)		
20:20	Cairo (MS)		
20:25	Sharjah (ME)		
22:45	Amman (TK)		
01:10	Amsterdam (KL)		
DEPARTURES			
Royal Jordanian (RJ)			
Flights			
(Terminal 1)			
05:45	Beirut (RJ)		
07:00	Aqaba (RJ)		
10:00	Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)		
10:05	Amman (RJ)		
11:00	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)		
11:00	Rome (RJ)		
11:05	Larnaca, Athens (RJ)		
11:55	Aqaba, Paris (RJ)		
12:00	London (RJ)		
12:45	Cairo (RJ)		
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)		
20:45	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)		

MARKET PRICES	
*Lowerflower price in filis per kg.	
Apple	700 500
Banana	680
Banana (Mukannmar)	620
Cabbage	120 / 70
Carrot	300/200
Cauliflower	200 / 100
Clamcintery	280 200
Cucumbers (large)	180 / 100
Cucumbers (small)	340 / 240
Eggplant	300 200
Garlic	620/500
Grape Fruit	280 / 200
Lemon	300 / 200
Marrow (large)	180 / 100
Marrow (small)	380 / 250
Onion (brown)	400 300
Olive (green)	400 300
Onion (green)	400 300
Onion (dry)	400 / 300
Orange	650/500
Pepper (hot)	280 / 160
Pepper (sweet)	250 / 160
Potato	340 / 240
Spinach	280 180
Tomato	500 300
String beans	900 500



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday receives a visiting Belgian parliamentary delegation to discuss recent developments in the Middle East and ties with Belgium and of other European nations. Attending the meeting was Senator Zeid Rifai (Petra photo).

Crown Prince, Belgian parliamentarians discuss advancing bilateral relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday reviewed Jordanian-Belgian relations and discussed Europe's role in developing the Middle East region in the new era of peace during a meeting at his office with a visiting Belgian parliamentary delegation.

In discussing mutual cooperation in several fields, Prince Hassan urged the European nations to raise their level of cooperation with Middle Eastern nations to that of "partnerships for peace."

Tackling the prospects of European assistance to the countries of the region, Prince Hassan referred to the recent Casablanca economic conference which he said was designed to involve advanced nations in the development of countries in North Africa and

the Middle East.

The Crown Prince discussed the Amman economic conference which is scheduled to take place in the second half of 1995, stressing his view that meeting should deal with specific development schemes and pave the way for their implementation.

He also spoke about Jordan's parliamentary system, stressing that the Kingdom was seeking to enhance democracy and political pluralism and ensure respect of human rights while pursuing economic development.

Roger Lallemand, head of the 14-member group which represents various political ideologies in the Belgian Upper House of Parliament, voiced his country's backing for the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and

praised the Kingdom's efforts at democratisation.

Mr. Lallemand said his country was committed to providing assistance to Jordan in various fields and to enhancing economic cooperation with the Kingdom in the coming stage.

He praised Jordan's economic performance which, he said, attained very high levels.

Present at the meeting was Zeid Rifai, head of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. Abdul Hadi Majali, deputy speaker of the Lower House of Parliament and Pierre du Muelenaere, Belgium's ambassador to Jordan.

The Belgian group, which earlier visited Israel and the West Bank, ended a 24-hour visit here Wednesday and headed for Syria.

Lawyers demand acquittals in state subversion case

AMMAN (AP) — Lawyers defending 22 suspects accused of subversion demanded their acquittal Wednesday, claiming pre-trial confessions were extracted under duress.

Winding up their case in the 12-week-old trial at the State Security Court, the seven-man defence team said their clients were not guilty of plotting or carrying out bombing attacks in the Kingdom as charged.

Court rules prohibit media disclosure of details of the proceedings or the identities of the accused or witnesses until the three-member military tribunal issues its verdict.

The 22 accused and another three tried in absentia are charged with plotting

through destabilisation of the Kingdom, assassinations of Jordanian and Palestinian peace negotiators and attacks on U.S. and Israeli interests. If convicted, they face a death penalty.

The defendants are nicknamed "Arab Afghans," volunteers who fought alongside the Afghan Mujahideen against the Soviet army in the 1980-90 war in Afghanistan.

The lawyer of one defendant who had pleaded guilty argued that his client was mentally unstable and could not be held responsible for his actions.

The defendant had told the court he was responsible for the Feb. 1 attack on Salwa

movie theatre in Zarqa. The defendant lost both his legs when the explosive went off prematurely. At least one other person was seriously wounded.

Other defendants retracted their pre-trial confessions at the outset of the hearings, which began Aug. 27, seven months after bomb attacks on cinemas in Zarqa and Amman said to show pornographic films.

The prosecution says that the bombing spree was part of a campaign to purge the conservative Kingdom of what the attackers saw as mounting social corruption caused by Western influence.

The accused are purported to be part of a clandestine group which received funding from Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi Arabian millionaire of Yemeni origin who bankrolled volunteers in the Afghan war and has since turned to financing Muslim extremists in the Arab World.

Prosecutors say many of the defendants received military training in Pakistan in the 1980s and returned home after the end of the Afghan war to destabilise the Kingdom.

Defence witnesses included medical doctors through whom the accused sought to prove that they were forced through physical means into signing the confessions.

The hearing was adjourned after two hours until Nov. 26, the last session before the verdict.

Premier, ministers answer deputies' queries

Flood damage, employment and murders among issues

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday said in Parliament that the government plans to distribute aid to people who suffered property damage in the recent floods and has already allocated initial funds for this purpose.

Dr. Majali made the statement while replying to deputies' queries on several issues, including government reaction to damage caused by the floods, the rise in the price of basic food commodities, the recent decision to reduce customs duty on cars and other imported goods, as well as the result of investigations into the murder of two pharmacist assistants in Amman.

With reference to the murder cases, Dr. Majali said the government cannot take statements at the moment as investigations were still under

way. He said that after the investigations have been completed the entire case will be referred to courts.

Dr. Majali said that the government was working out a formula to avoid any complications in the application of the Sales Tax Law resulting from the new rates for customs duty tariffs on imported goods.

Agriculture Minister Mansour Ben Tarif replied to questions related to high prices of food commodities by saying that the ministry was endeavouring to improve the local farmers' income through exports. But, he said that the ministry was at the same time controlling the situation in the markets by achieving a balance between the interests of the producers and the consumers.

A query by Deputy Abed Mousa Nahar asked about

the level of reported pollution in the soil resulting from the use of various forms of pesticides and fertilisers and the impact on public health as well as agricultural exports. To that, Mr. Ben Tarif said the Ministry of Agriculture was pursuing strict control of the use of pesticides which, he said, are only imported with approval of a specialised committee of experts from several ministries and the University of Jordan.

The Agriculture Ministry usually cancels the registration of any kind of pesticides proven to be dangerous to public health, added Mr. Ben Tarif.

Labour Minister Khaled Ghazawi replied to a query by Deputy Fawzi Tueimeh about guest workers employed in the Disi district by stressing that the ministry was taking measures to ensure

that local workers gradually take the place of the non-Jordanians. He emphasised that the government was doing all it can to control the labour market and give priority in employment to Jordanian workers.

Water and Irrigation Minister Saleh Irsheidat replied to a query put by Deputy Mohammad Daoudieh on the accuracy of water bills in the Tafleh region, stressing that inaccurate readings of water meters were a common problem not only in Tafleh. He added that the Water and Irrigation Ministry was beginning to replace most water meters to amend the situation.

Adel Qudah, minister of supply, replied to Deputy Ali Abul Ragheb query on the ministry's decision not to contract local and foreign firms which have bid to con-

struct two grain warehouses in the Irbid region. Mr. Qudah said that he declined to sign the contract with the firms following an in-depth study of the basic conditions attached to the contract.

At the session, which was chaired by Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srou, three amendments to Jordanian laws were referred to the concerned House committees.

The House reviewed a report by its Committee on Palestine and Occupied Arab Lands and a proposal was put to the House to issue a statement condemning Israel's recent measures at Al Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

The House entrusted Parliament's General Secretariat to draft a statement in this respect.

Mr. Srou announced that the next House session will be held Sunday evening.

AMO issues permission for 800 tonnes of tomato exports to Israel; no shipments yet

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The state-run Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO) has issued permissions to export 800 tonnes of tomatoes to Israel, which is facing a shortage of the commodity after imposing a ban on import of produce from the Gaza Strip, officials said Wednesday.

It will be the first Jordanian exports to Israel after the two countries signed a peace treaty last month and formally sealed it by exchanging the documents of ratification on Nov. 10.

Abdul Rahman Abu Sneh of the AMO told the Jordan Times on Wednesday that the organisation, an umbrella body for all agricultural exports from and imports to Jordan, had issued permissions for 40 truckloads of tomato exports to Israel. Each vehicle will have a capacity of 20 tonnes.

But no actual shipment was sent across the border as of Wednesday noon since Jordanian exporters and Israeli importers had not reached agreement on prices and other commercial terms, he said.

"We believe that when agreement is reached, Jordan will be sending about 150 tonnes of tomatoes to Israel every day," said Mr. Abu Sneh.

According to market sources, Jordanian exporters were demanding \$1.75 per kilo of tomatoes while Israeli importers were offering only \$1.5, and negotiations were continuing over telephone and fax to arrive at an acceptable price.

But traders also noted that exporters were getting the price of nearly \$1.75 from their traditional markets in the Gulf states, and there was no incentive for them to sell cheaper to the Israelis.

In the local market,

tomatoes fetched around JD1.5 (about \$2.15) per kilo on Wednesday, a price that, by definition, is a dis-incentive for exports.

There is also concern in the market that the exports would lead to shortages in the market and higher prices. But traders say that exports to Israel might only mean a reduced quantity going to the Gulf markets without affecting the actual market situation in the country.

According to Bashir Gazzawi of Irbid, who secured permission to export 200 tonnes (10 truckloads) from the AMO on Wednesday, the Israelis were demanding tomatoes of nearly American and European standards and packing specifications.

"We do have tomatoes of the standards and specifications sought by the Israelis, but the price has to be right," said Mr. Gazzawi.

Israel turned to Jordan for its tomato needs when

prices shot up to more than \$2.5 per kilogramme after it imposed a ban on import of agricultural products from the Gaza Strip citing an outbreak of cholera there. It is not known when the ban will be lifted.

Mr. Abu Sneh said the AMO stood ready to meet Israeli requirements of agricultural produce if Israel approached Jordan. So far, the requirement has been limited to tomatoes.

Jordan is a signatory to the Arab countries' boycott of Israel because that law remains on Jordanian statute books — although the presence of Israeli tourists and the permission to export tomatoes seem to demonstrate it is no longer being applied.

Information Minister Jawad Anani told the Associated Press that, although the peace treaty specifies that the boycott should be lifted, "there have to be legal measures

adopted by the government to repeal the current Jordanian boycott law."

He said: "The intention is there, but this is a long process of outlining a law and sending it to parliament for ratification."

Earlier, the Agence France Presse quoted an unidentified official as saying Jordan had lifted its economic boycott of Israel and drawn up new customs legislation following their peace treaty.

The end to Jordan's observance of the four-decade Arab League boycott of Israel was a "logical conclusion" of the peace treaty, said the official.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said Monday that the boycott, declared in 1951, would remain in force until Israel complied with U.N. resolutions and gave up occupied Syrian and Lebanese land.

New telephone exchange projects to open 26,200 lines

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Post and Communications Hashem Dabbas Wednesday laid the foundation stones for two telephone exchange buildings at Naser and Abu Alanda districts of Amman adding a collective initial capacity of 26,200 telephone lines to the country's telephone service system.

The two projects are part of the national programme intended to boost the Telecommunications Corporation's (TCC) capabilities to meet the growing demand for telephone services, said Dr. Dabbas who is also TCC board chairman.

The national TCC programme, he said, is expected to make available more than 250,000 telephone lines in Jordan by the end of 1997. The electronic exchange at Naser has a capacity of 20,000 lines, and the Abu Alanda exchange 6,200 lines, added the minister in an address at a ceremony to

launch the projects.

The two projects, added the minister, are expected to be operational by the second half of 1996.

Jaafar Abu Abboud, TCC assistant director general, who is in charge of the national programmes said the programme entails setting up 90 buildings to house the new telephone exchanges, some of which have already been announced in tenders.

Referring to the Naser exchange, he said that it could be boosted at a later stage to contain 35,000 lines, and the Abu Alanda exchange could be increased to 20,000 lines in the final stage.

Mr. Abu Abboud said that by August 1995 the two buildings will be completed and telephone services would be operational by December 1996.

Earlier in the day, Dr. Dabbas opened a post office in Shmeisani district



Minister of Post and Communications Hashem Dabbas sets a cornerstone on a new building under construction in Amman to contain a telephone exchange system (Petra photo).

WHAT'S GOING ON

MUSIC SHOW

★ "Nag'airs" — music show at the Marriott Hotel on Friday at 8:30 p.m.

FILMS

★ Spanish film entitled "Cartas A Alou" at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre) on Thursday at 4:30 p.m.

★ Film entitled "Mr. Blandings Buili His Dream House" at the American Center on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

★ Lecture entitled "Human Settlement in the Upper Zarqa Valley: Results of the 1993 Italian Archaeological Project" by Dr. Gaetano Palumbo at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Ceramics exhibition by Najwa Annab at the Orfali Art Gallery.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Sa'id Al 'Ani at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art. Also showing a paintings exhibition by Husni Abu Karim.

★ Exhibition on human international law entitled "Drawings from Arab Calligraphy" at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing an exhibition of wooden products by Atallah Zabaneh.

★ First Exhibition of Jordanian Engineering and Electric Products at the Amman International Exhibition hall, Marj Al Hamam.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Daniel Argimon at the Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).

★ Exhibit entitled "Signs and Symbols: Communication and Interpretation from the Brandywine Workshop" at the American Center.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Radwan Al Dhahi, Jamal Abbas, and Walid Nasrallah at Ain Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Ahmad Na'wash at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Salam Kan'an at the Balkan Art Gallery, Fubeih.

★ Exhibition of art by Annie Sakikab at the French Cultural Centre.

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Nervous Taiwan repeats apology for mistake 'shelling' of China

TAIPEI (AFP) — Taiwan said Wednesday it had suspended an artillery exercise on one of its islands after the "mistaken" shelling of a Chinese mainland village which fuelled new tension between the rivals.

In a sign of the jittery state of nerves, Defence Minister Sun Chen angrily denied a newspaper report that Chinese warplanes crossed the neutral line along the Taiwan Strait shortly after the incident Monday.

An informed source told AFP, the heavily fortified defence command on Kinmen Island had been in a state of emergency since Oct. 10 when a group of Chinese troops came near Uchiu, another small islet, and challenged Taiwanese counterparts to a battle.

Mr. Sun repeated Taiwan's embarrassed apologies for the bombardment, which according to China wounded four people in a Fujian province village near Xiamen.

But the Beijing press did not report the apologies made Tuesday. Chinese reports concentrated on the strong protest made over the incident which was described as "vicious and evil."

In a speech to parliament, Mr. Sun reaffirmed that there was no hostile intention behind the 13 or more shells

which landed on the mainland.

He also repeated an offer to "compensate for what has been done to the village the victims accordingly."

But a report by the mass-circulation United Daily News brought a rebuke from Mr. Sun. The report said the Taiwan military dispatched fighters to intercept Chinese warplanes which cross the neutral line but immediately flew back to the mainland.

"There was no such incident," Mr. Sun told members of parliament in a bid to defuse speculation which the government fears could create fuel insecurity.

A shelling drill which has been going on at Kinmen Island for the past month was suspended, an official said.

Local media also reported the suspension. But military spokesman's office in Taipei would not confirm the order, saying it was a defence secret.

The informed source said the shelling exercise had been going on since the Oct. 10 incident. He added that such an intensive drill day and night had been rare in recent years.

Military strategists said the exercise was a result of eight war games carried out by China at its eastern and southern coast this year.

Lin Yu-Fang, chief of the

Graduate Institute of Strategem at Tamkang University, said judging from the landing method and the number of troops, a September war game at Dongshan Island in the East China Sea showed that "Beijing starts to seriously consider taking outlying islands like Kinmen, Matsu and even Taiping Island of the Spratlys archipelago."

All three such islands are claimed by Taiwan which has also stationed troops there.

In Beijing, Taiwan's embarrassed apologies for the "mistake" bombing were ignored by the Chinese press, indicating that the rivals have hit a new source of friction.

The Xiamen City Hall, near where the shells fell, said it had no knowledge of an apology. Press reports of the East China Sea showed mention of the apology or compensation offer made by Taipei.

A spokesman for the Association For Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, China's body dealing with relations with Taiwan, told AFP that an apology had been received though. He said it arrived Tuesday from its Taiwanese counterpart the Straits Exchange Foundation.

"We are going to replay but we cannot tell you when and in which way," said spokesman Xu Zhiqin.

Mr. Xu did confirm though that talks between the two bodies planned for Sunday in Nanjing would go ahead.

The bombardment is only the latest of several untoward occurrences.

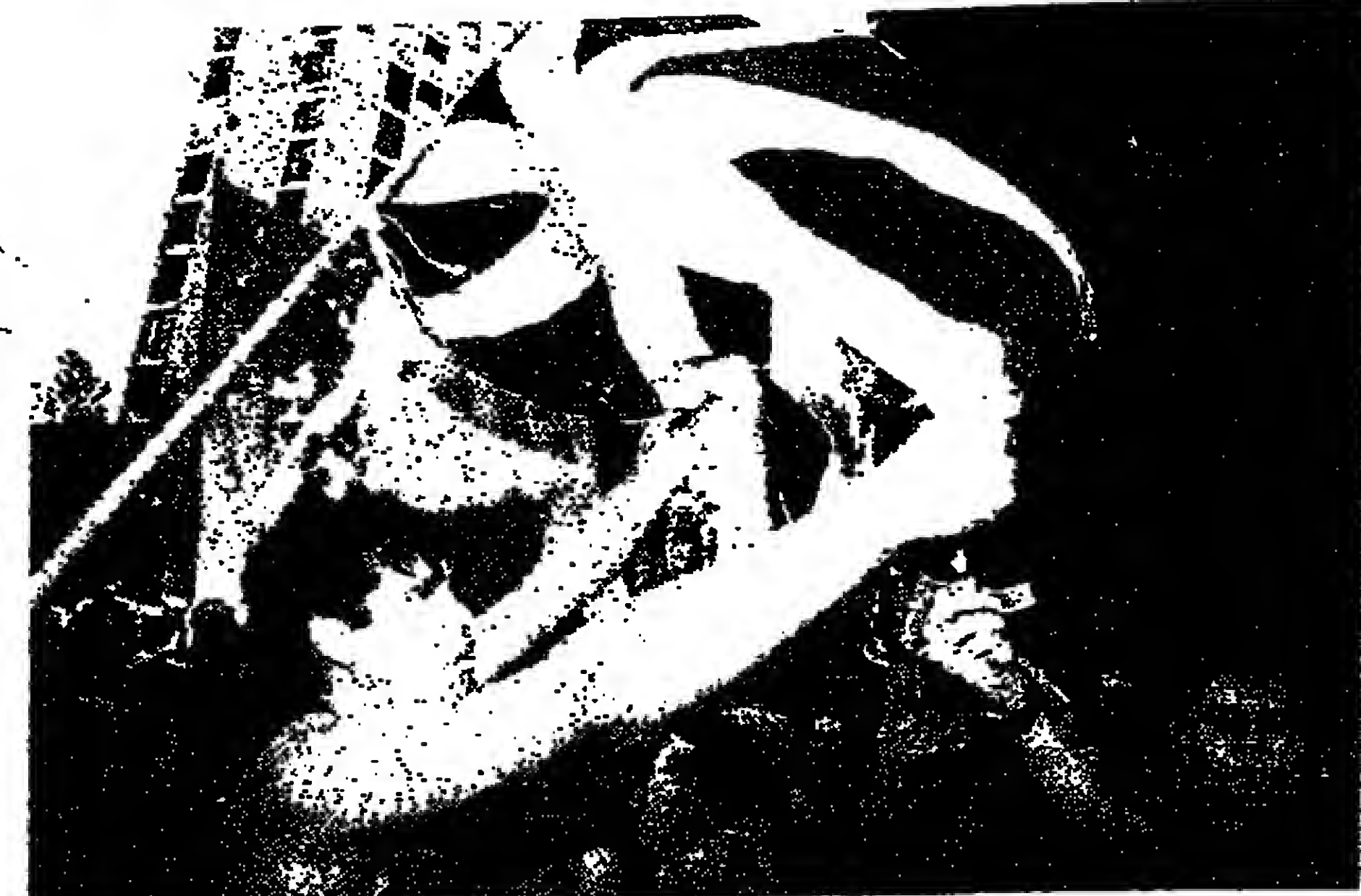
Last week Rear-Admiral Lee Kai, the commander of a Marine troop on the small island of Wuchiu, committed suicide after writing several letters complaining of the pressures of work.

This week police arrested a group for smuggling amphetamines from China through heavily-fortified Quemoy to Taiwan. The smugglers had evaded coast patrols to use the route for more than a year, police said.

"This would never have happened during the martial law era when we had strict coastal controls and military discipline," said Mr. Chao.

Yang Chih-Heng, an independent military researcher, said morale on the front line was poor and many soldiers pulled all possible strings to avoid being sent there.

"Taiwan has the money to buy advanced weapons or even to produce some itself, but if people using the weapons are not professional or alert enough, it's hard to imagine what kind of serious results they will lead to," said Mr. Yang of the independent Institute for National Policy Research.



Argentine protesters burn the Union Jack and the U.S. flag (behind left) during a demonstration against Prince Andrew's visit outside the British embassy. Police on horseback beat back demonstrators who toppled a security fence at the embassy, clubbing one man in the face and making four arrests before the crowd was dispersed (AFP photo)

Violence mars Andrew's Argentine visit

BUENOS AIRES (R) — A violent demonstration outside the British ambassador's residence in Buenos Aires marred the first day of a visit by Prince Andrew billed as a sign of reconciliation after the Falklands War.

A group of about 100 protesters including war veterans and fringe left-wing groups set fire to British and U.S. flags and charged police barriers. Police and mounted officers charged wielding truncheons.

Police said dozens of protesters were arrested. A Reuters photographer saw one being carried away in handcuffs with his face covered in blood.

Prince Andrew was inside the residence but an embassy spokeswoman said he went out with a scheduled speech to businessmen as soon as police dispersed the crowd.

Argentina's President Carlos Menem has billed the prince's visit as a chance to promote dialogue favourable to Argentina's bid for the Falklands — which it calls the Malvinas — over which the two countries went to war in

1982. Mr. Menem said after playing a round of golf with Prince Andrew, who arrived earlier in the day: "If there is no dialogue then there is no rapprochement and therefore no possibility of recovering (the islands)."

He rejected criticisms of the invitation, which a right wing deputy called a frivolity by a government preparing "another betrayal of Argentina's interests in the Malvinas."

Argentine veterans denounced "the decadent British royalty."

"With that type of attitude there's no chance of advancing in the recovery of the islands," said Mr. Menem, who often states his conviction the islands will be in Argentine hands by 2000.

Prince Andrew, Queen Elizabeth's second son, saw combat in the 10-week war as a Royal Navy helicopter pilot in the task force Britain sent to oust Argentine forces. More than 1,000 servicemen died, most of them Argentines.

The choice of the sailor-

prince to make the first official visit by a member of Britain's royal family since the war in the South Atlantic — though his estranged wife Sarah Ferguson and father the Duke of Edinburgh have made private visits — is charged with the symbolism of reconciliation.

On Wednesday he re-inaugurates a statue in Buenos Aires of British 19th century statesman George Canning that had its hand lopped off and was removed in the patriotic fervour after 1982. A month ago, a statue to Argentine independence hero General Jose De San Martin was unveiled in London.

The veterans denounced the restoration of the statue of Canning, who they called a "pirate," and said they would only return the severed hand once the islands are Argentine.

Argentina insists rapprochement and talk of joint ventures with the British to exploit oil reserves in the islands do not mean it will relax its efforts to win sovereignty.

Major set for new Euro-row over budget

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major faced a showdown with rebels from his Conservative Party over funding for the European Union as he unveiled a cautious legislative agenda for the coming year Wednesday.

A bill to raise Britain's contributions to the European Union budget by £250 million (\$397 million) a year by 2000 was the most controversial feature of a low-key programme in a government-written speech to parliament by Queen Elizabeth.

Battle lines hardened Wednesday over the bill, which could turn into a vote of confidence in Mr. Major's administration.

Right-wingers, angered by policy U-turns and what they perceive as a lack of guts in the government, have pledged to make a stand over Europe, an issue which almost brought down Mr. Major in a bitter battle over the Maastricht Treaty in 1993.

The agenda read out by the Queen, in a glittering age-old ceremony in the House of Lords, contained no surprises.

The government will legislate to open up the domestic

gas market to competition and to equalise the pension age for men and women at 65 by the year 2020.

A bill will be introduced to authorise the construction of a high-speed rail link between London and the Channel tunnel — several years behind France — and to tackle discrimination against disabled people.

But attention in parliament was focused on the row over Europe, which threatens to split the Conservative Party, in power since 1979.

Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind told BBC Radio that Mr. Major had

committed Britain to increasing its budget dues by agreeing to the deal at an EU summit in Edinburgh in December 1992.

"It was a commitment that was warmly applauded in the House of Commons and it is central to our policy in defence of Britain's national interest and I believe it is appropriate to treat it in that way," he said.

Earlier, senior Conservative member of parliament Sir Marcus Fox warned that defeat for Mr. Major over the bill could bring down the government and force a general election.

reached, for bilateral and multilateral operations in the context of the Western European Union or NATO actions," the sources said.

French Defence Ministry officials said that the initiative arose from the idea that the two countries could complement each other's air forces, particularly in the field of transport.

Mr. Leotard said recently that it was planned to harmonise the running of the two air forces, adding that so far only minor steps had been taken.

France, U.K. plan closer air force cooperation

PARIS (AFP) — France and Britain will improve coordination between their air forces at a summit meeting between the two countries to be held in Chantilly in western France Friday.

But Britain is holding out against a French demand that it should join a project to develop a new European military transport aircraft, French officials said.

The British also want to wait until 1991 and the opening of discussions on the future of Europe before setting out their view of an inte-

grated European defence system, a subject already at the centre of French concerns, the officials said.

The summit is to be attended by President Francois Mitterrand, Prime Minister Edouard Balladur and British Prime Minister John Major. The French and British foreign ministers, Alain Juppe and Douglas Hurd, and defence ministers, Francois Leotard and Malcolm Rifkind, are also due to be present.

The two sides are expected to agree on the creation of a

joint air planning centre, described by a British source as "an embryo headquarters" which in case of need could call on units from the two countries but would not have any forces assigned to it.

The centre would be staffed by between 10 and 12 officers and would be situated at an air base the whereabouts of which has yet to be decided.

"Its task is to know where there are available forces and it will have total flexibility in using them, once agreement at the political level has been

reached, for bilateral and multilateral operations in the context of the Western European Union or NATO actions," the sources said.

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Mr. Leotard said recently that it was planned to harmonise the running of the two air forces, adding that so far only minor steps had been taken.

Rescuers find child victims of Philippine quake

CALAPAN, Philippines (R) — Filipino rescuers Wednesday found the bodies of three more young children killed by an earthquake and tidal wave as they slept.

The discovery took the death toll from Tuesday's quake to at least 65. The three, aged between three and five, were found 150 metres from their homes in Baco, a small town on the central Philippine island of Mindoro that bore the brunt of the disaster, a senior official said.

Rescuers were still searching areas along the east coast of Mindoro where roads and bridges were destroyed.

President Fidel Ramos, who has declared Mindoro a calamity area, has cut short his trip to Indonesia for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum to visit the stricken area.

He is due to return home Thursday, one day ahead of schedule, a government statement said.

As the people of Mindoro began to bury their dead, senior local official Miguel Avelino said thousands of people displaced by the quake urgently needed aid.

"As of now we need additional medicines considering the number of wounded," he said. "We need food, medicines and shelter for the people, also clothing."

Officials said 26 poor victims would be buried in a mass paupers' funeral at the Roman Catholic Cemetery Thursday in the provincial capital of Calapan.

The earthquake was the most damaging to strike the Philippines since July 1990.



Residents walk on a road cracked open by a strong earthquake which hit Mindoro Island in central Philippines (AFP photo)

when nearly 1,600 people died in the mountainous north of Luzon Island, including more than 370 people in the resort of Baguio.

The Mindoro quake registered 7.0 on the Richter Scale.

Many of those killed were young children who drowned when their homes were hit by a tidal wave which survivors said smashed down on their flimsy wood and palm thatch

houses. Rescue workers said they had found some children's bodies hanging from trees, thrown there by the force of the waves.

Baco was virtually deserted the day after the quake as survivors trudged towards Calapan with a few belongings. The water had receded but overturned trees, smashed houses and dark and marked the passage of the

tidal wave. Japanese Professor Yuji Murata, who was trapped on Mindoro's Mount Halcon with two Filipino companions by landslides, was rescued early Wednesday.

Murata, a professor at Tokyo Nodai University, was picked up by a military helicopter from a tribal settlement about halfway up the 2,585-metre (8,479-foot) mountain.

More than 1,300 aftershocks followed the quake, 189 of them strong enough to rattle the nerves of people still in shock, seismologists said. The strongest measured 5.1 on the Richter Scale.

Hundreds of people who lost their homes or were too nervous to stay inside crowded into the grounds of Calapan's hospital for the night.

Inside the small hospital the hallways were crowded with injured lying on the floor or anywhere where there was room.

"They are in the hospital hallways because there is no more space. The hospital is too small," said provincial health officer Dr. Romeo Infante.

The quake on Mindoro, about 140 kilometres south of Manila, badly damaged at least 19 bridges, smashed roads and knocked out power and the water system.

Officials said a power barge that provided electricity to Calapan had been swept up a river by the tidal wave after being torn from its moorings.

It may have to be repaired before power can start to be restored to much of the island.

Former New Zealand Labour MP sets up new political party

WELLINGTON (R) — Independent member of Parliament Peter Dunne Wednesday made a play for the crowded middle ground of New Zealand politics, announcing the formation of a new party called Future New Zealand.

"Future New Zealand will advocate common sense, mainstream policies," he told a news conference.

The party stands for lower taxes but sees government providing social services, he said. It supports the main structures of the New Zealand economy, which was opened and deregulated in

the 1980s. Mr. Dunne had signalled his intention to form a new party ahead of the introduction of a proportional representation-style voting system in New Zealand when he left the opposition Labour Party in October.

He was critical of a new Labour policy to raise taxes for the wealthy.

"In the short-term we see ourselves as being able to corner 10 to 12 per cent of the vote and be a viable, significant coalition partner for one or other of the major parties," Mr. Dunne said in an interview.

Future New Zealand joins several other parties positioning themselves in the political middle ground ahead of the introduction of Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) voting, which is expected to produce coalition governments.

New Zealand does not have to hold an election until the end of 1996, but the MMP system that replaces the current Westminster-style first past the post system will be in place by mid-1995. Commentators expect the current National Party government to complete its term.

Panel urges Canadian foreign policy shift

OTTAWA (R) — In a major shift in Canadian policy, a parliamentary committee said Tuesday Canada must aggressively capture new markets in Asia and Latin America and should not let human rights concerns get in the way of doing business.

The panel of legislators said Canada should reduce its trade dependence on the United States. It also recom-

mended that aid given to developing nations be tied to trade.

The committee reviewing Canada's foreign policy in the post-cold war era found that trade was more important to Canadian security than human rights violations, and signed billions of dollars worth in contracts, including the sale of two nuclear power reactors to China.

Opponents of the Liberal

government said the committee's emphasis on trade over human rights was already being practised by Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

In the last 10 days, Mr. Chretien has led business missions to China and Indonesia, countries accused of human rights violations, and signed billions of dollars worth in contracts, including the sale of two nuclear power reactors to China.

Maryland Democrat wins governorship

HYATTSVILLE, MD. (AP) — Democrat Parris Glendening won the race for Maryland governor by a mere 3,420 votes after all absentee ballots were counted.

In a state where Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-to-1, Mr. Glendening had proclaimed victory the day after the election, when he led by 6,187 votes.

Republican Ellen Sauerbrey did not concede. She had been attempting to become Maryland's first woman governor and its first Republican governor since Spiro Agnew was elected in 1966.

Mr. Agnew later served as vice president under Richard Nixon. Baltimore County was the last to count its absentee ballots. Ms. Sauerbrey received 3,739 absentee ballots there to Mr. Glendening's 2,442, but it was not enough to put her over the top.

The unofficial total vote, which will not be certified until the end of this week at the earliest, was 703,963 votes for Mr. Glendening and

700,543 for Ms. Sauerbrey. Ms. Sauerbrey had said Monday that she would challenge what she said were irregularities in the election.

"It is my purpose to ensure that the people of Maryland receive a fair and accurate outcome of this election," said Ms. Sauerbrey.

Until Tuesday's results, Maryland had been one of six states where election races remained undecided as absentee ballots are counted and vote results are challenged.

In Connecticut, Rep. Sam Gejdenson won a four-vote victory in the 2nd Congressional District, the secretary of the state's office announced Tuesday in certifying the results of a recount.

But Republican Edward W. Munster has promised to appeal — either through the courts or in the Republican-controlled Congress that takes over in early January.

The original vote count had showed Mr. Gejdenson leading by two votes, the

closest congressional race in the country. About 186,000 votes were cast in the election.

"There's another chapter or two to be played out in this drama," said State Republican Party Chairman John A. Mastropietro.

If the results of the recount are held up, Ms. Gejdenson would return to Congress for an eighth term.

Meanwhile, California Sen. Dianne Feinstein's lead grew Monday in her race for reelection, but Republican challenger Michael Huffington refused to concede.

With more than 667,000 absentee ballots remaining to be processed, Ms. Feinstein had 3,637,972 votes to Mr. Huffington's 3,510,652.

Mr. Huffington said he expected "a miracle." The Associated Press has already declared Ms. Feinstein the winner.

Also still hanging in the balance are the governor's race in Alaska, and House contests in California, New York and Oregon.

Japan court orders roof to be chopped

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese court ordered a man to "chop off" a top part of his house because neighbours were not getting their fair share of sunlight, a court official said Wednesday. The Tokyo District Court said the man's house violated building laws and drastically reduced the number of hours of sunlight reaching his neighbours' house.

Presiding Judge Tomokatsu Tsukahara said: "In order to restore a fair amount of sun, part of the building must be chopped off." The three-storey house in Tokyo's residential Meguro Ward was completed in early 1992. Houses are built closely together in Japan's land-scarce capital.

This has caused numerous problems, including complaints about tall buildings blocking out the sun. The court also ordered the man to pay 300,000 yen (\$3,061) in compensation. The plaintiff had demanded three million yen (\$30,600). A lawyer specialising in such cases told the daily Asahi Shimbun that it was extremely rare for a court to order a building to be chopped off.

Half of Danish 11-15 year-olds suffer stress

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — Half of Denmark's school children aged between 11 and 15 years suffer symptoms of stress, the preliminary results of a university study published Tuesday said. The children experience sleep problems, headaches, nervousness and feelings of isolation, the Copenhagen University investigation found, according to a report in the conservative daily newspaper Berlingske Tidende. Women affected are the children of unemployed parents, investigators found among the 4,000 subjects interviewed. The study is part of a wider inquiry of children in 26 countries being carried out by the World Health Organisation.

Japan shrine attracts fervent divorce pleas

TOKYO (R) — A shrine in eastern Japan that claims to be the nation's only one that accepts prayers from would-be divorcees is drawing hordes of worshippers thanks to widespread publicity. An official at the Kadota Shrine said Wednesday: "We get lots of visitors thanks in part to the wide press coverage we've been receiving." The shrine in Ashikaga, 50 miles (80 km) north of Tokyo, also known as the "divorcing shrine," is visited by scores of people every day hoping to obtain a divorce or break off other unwelcome contacts. The official said the shrine dates back about a century to when the wives of rich local merchants wrote prayers asking that their husbands leave their lovers and come back to them. Worshippers in Japan traditionally write their wishes on a thin piece of wooden board which is then hung in the grounds of the shrine. A government official said Japan's divorce rate has been slowly growing since 1990. Latest figures show that there were close to 190,000 divorces in 1993, up about 9,000 from the previous year.

Man caught after 21 years on the run

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese man charged with fraud has been caught by police after 21 years on the run on Fukuoka Island in the south of the country, the daily Mainichi reported Wednesday. Katsumi Miyazaki, 63, was questioned by court officials in Fukuoka at a hotel in the town. First charged in March 1973, Mr. Miyazaki disappeared the day his trial was due to begin, but because he had not yet gone to court, his disappearance could not strictly be termed an escape, the newspaper said. As a result, if found guilty he will only be sentenced for his alleged original crime.

Hong Kong TV axes anti-China talk show

HONG KONG (AFP) — A popular Hong Kong television channel is to axe a top-rating talk show after criticism from Beijing of its alleged anti-China slant. The move has heightened concern about an erosion of press freedom in the run-up to China's takeover of Hong Kong in 1997.



General Pedro de Morais Neto (right) the head of the Angolan governmental military delegation shakes hands with the head of the UNITA military delegation, General Eugenio Ngolo in Lusaka (AFP photo)

Angola truce raises peace hopes

LUSAKA (AFP) — Angolan troops and UNITA rebels Wednesday fought their way up to a scheduled truce which has rekindled diminishing hopes for peace after almost two decades of one of the world's most bitter civil wars.

Government troops recaptured Tando-Zinze in the northwest of Angola's oil-rich Cabinda enclave, the local military spokesman said hours before the truce was to take effect at 8:00 p.m. (2000 GMT).

Bligadier Manuel Paiva gave no full casualty figures but said two civilians had been killed in 48 hours of

fighting. A military source earlier said that a "large number" of regular army soldiers had been killed and that civilians were fleeing the town for neighbouring villages.

The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) took Tando-Zinze earlier Wednesday in retaliation for the capture of Chimbandi in the southwest of Cabinda at the beginning of November, the source said.

Cabinda, where armed separatists are also active, lies to the north of Angola proper and came under

Luanda's jurisdiction in 1975 on independence from Portugal as the conflict began.

In Luanda, the general staff declared that it had ordered all Angolan army units to stop fighting from 8:00 p.m. and said it had given "precise instructions" to troops currently engaged in combat.

The official statement signed by Chief of Staff General Joao de Matos did not spell out what these instructions were.

Rival military delegations agreed to the truce late Tuesday in the Zambian capital Lusaka, after a year of haggling and stonewalling in negotiations while the conflict killed tens of thousands of Angolans.

Both sides had "expressed firm and profound willingness" to put to an end to the fighting, U.N. chief mediator Alainoune Blondin Beye said before the deal was announced.

The patchy road to a second chance for peace began on Nov. 15 last year, exactly a year before the truce, after UNITA took up arms again after losing September 1992 elections held under a previous accord of May 1991.

The truce is due to hold until Nov. 22, the deadline for the start of a permanent ceasefire two days after UNITA chief Jonas Savimbi and President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos are expected to sign a peace protocol Sunday.

"This is an important occasion for all our people who have suffered a lot... We in UNITA have said throughout the peace negotiations here that we are committed to peace," said UNITA delegation chief General Eugenio Manuvakola.

U.N. Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) chief military observer General Chris Garuba, who co-signed the agreement between UNITA and the government, spoke of a "significant milestone."



Angolan soldiers and a young boy maimed during the war, talking together at an orthopaedic centre for disabled soldiers in Luanda (AFP photo)

Ukraine parliament ratifies NPT

KIEV (AFP) — The Ukrainian parliament Wednesday ratified the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but attached conditions including the signing of an international accord guaranteeing Ukrainian security.

President Leonid Kuchma told parliament that a British-Russian-U.S. memorandum guaranteeing Ukraine's security would be signed Dec. 6 at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to be held in Madrid.

A Western diplomat in Moscow confirmed that such an accord was being prepared.

France has also agreed to offer a separate security guarantee to Ukraine once it ratifies the NPT, said Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Tarasyuk.

The parliament also laid the condition that nuclear materials remain the property of Ukraine, but with the proviso that they could be used only for peaceful purposes.

The third was that economic or military pressure from a nuclear-state would be considered an exceptional circumstance allowing Ukraine to re-examine its position on the NPT.

In a first vote, the parliament

voted in principle to ratify the NPT, by 295 in favour to 10 against.

The second vote, confirming the conditions, was even more overwhelming, with 301 in favour, eight against.

Russia, the United States and other Western powers have repeatedly pressed Kiev to ratify the treaty which was launched in 1970 and is due to be renewed in 1995.

The NPT commits nuclear powers not to help non-nuclear states develop atomic weapons and the non-nuclear states not to develop such arms. It also forbids conversion of nuclear technology from civilian to military uses.

and impersonation. "It's the government's duty to take to task those who have been involved in this fraud, this forgery," she declared.

Ms. Bhutto said Mr. Sharif's drive to topple her was really aimed at safeguarding his family's business empire, based on Ittefaq Foundries, which she said had been illicitly given to Mr. Sharif by former military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq, under martial law.

"Ittefaq foundries does not belong to him, it belongs to the state," Ms. Bhutto said. "It was given to him fraudulently, through coercive power, not through any constitutional power."

Ms. Bhutto's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, nationalised Ittefaq Foundries when he was prime minister in the early 1970s.

Bosnian Serbs close in on Bihac town

SARAJEVO (R) — U.N. peacekeepers said Wednesday Bosnian Serb forces were closing in on the Muslim town of Bihac as the Muslim-led Bosnian army struggled to halt the Serb advance.

U.S. officials said NATO was considering a ban on heavy weapons in the area to protect civilians threatened by the Serb onslaught in northwest Bosnia.

The Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) was steadily advancing from the east and south-east towards Bihac town as fighting raged on high ground above the town, a U.N. spokesman in Zagreb said.

U.N. peacekeepers in the area reported Tuesday heavy artillery fire southeast of Bihac and that the Serbs were gaining territory from the south at a pace of one kilometre a day.

"The BiH (Bosnian government army) is holding isolated pockets but that is considered normal in the case of a rapid advance," U.N. spokesman Colonel Tim Spicer told Reuters. "Their resistance is not considered militarily significant."

Col. Spicer said it was still unclear who held the high ground east of town, known as Grabez Plateau.

BAS Chief of Staff General Manojlo Milovanovic, commander of the Bihac operations, said his men were in

control of the Grabez and Grmusa Plateaux and were only four to five kilometres from Bihac, the Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA) said.

The Muslim 5th Corps took the Serbs by surprise two weeks ago when it launched an attack that captured 250 square kilometres of territory. The better armed Serbs, who control 70 per cent of Bosnia after 31 months of war, have since recovered much of the lost ground.

NATO is considering establishing a heavy weapons-exclusion zone around Bihac town, which is a U.N.-declared "safe area," the U.S. Defence Department said Tuesday.

U.S. officials said privately the United States had raised the issue and that the allies, at a meeting Tuesday of NATO ambassadors in Brussels, agreed to look into the proposal.

An exclusion zone would allow the use of allied air power to prevent Serb forces from overrunning Bihac.

But U.S. officials expressed pessimism about the prospects of getting Bihac town declared a no-weapons zone, saying European nations were likely to object that ground troops and not just air power would be needed.

Fighting gripped Bosnia elsewhere with heavy shelling

reported Tuesday in the Muslim towns of Tuzla and Kljuc. Several artillery or mortar shells hit Tuzla town in northern Bosnia Tuesday, killing at least one civilian.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic called the battle for Bihac a "real drama."

"We will see who is going to come out as the winner. If we manage to resist, the Serbs will never try anything similar again," he was quoted by Sarajevo Radio as saying.

The United Nations said Serbs from the breakaway Krajina region of neighbouring Croatia were shelling the Muslims in support of their fellow Serbs in Bosnia, but there was no sign that Krajina ground troops had entered Bosnia.

U.S. Ambassador to Croatia Peter Galbraith said his government was "very concerned about the situation in Bihac" and especially about the role of Krajina Serbs in the fighting.

"Bihac is a U.N. safe area and any effort that has as its goal the seizure of the Bihac pocket would have enormous humanitarian consequences and very, very serious political and military consequences," he said.

The entry of rebel Muslims into the zone to fight alongside the Serbs was bound to

confuse matters even more.

A large force of Muslim rebels was being equipped by their leader Fikret Abdic, ousted from the enclave three months ago with some 30,000 followers, to join in the Serb onslaught on Bihac, the United Nations said.

"Our estimate is that Mr. Abdic is presently mobilising a force of at least 5,000 from refugee camps," U.N. spokesman Michael Williams told a news conference.

The U.N. said a humanitarian crisis threatened thousands of civilians in the Bihac pocket because of a months-old Serb blockade. Basic supplies are so scarce in Bihac that the sick and injured must provide their own fuel if they want to be driven to hospital, a U.N. aid official said.

Later Wednesday, United Nations commanders asked NATO jets to fly over the northwest Bosnian enclave of Bihac after a converted surface-to-air missile landed near Bangladeshi peacekeepers Wednesday, a U.N. spokesman said.

"One or two SA-2s impacted 500-1000 metres from the Bangladeshi camp near Cazin," said Major Herve Gourmelon, "and the Bihac U.N. Headquarters requested a NATO air presence. For the moment it is quiet there again."

France Wednesday again slammed the U.S. decision to end enforcement of a U.N.-imposed arms embargo on Bosnia as a "worrying" development that had broken the great powers' consensus on the issue.

French President Francois Mitterrand told a cabinet meeting Wednesday that Washington's decision last Friday was "a unilateral move."

Prime Minister Edouard Balladur told the cabinet he was "worried" that the U.S. move could put French soldiers at risk.

France currently supplies the largest contingent of U.N. forces serving in the former Yugoslavia — 4,534 troops, including 3,053 serving in Bosnia — and has already threatened to pull its troops out of the region if the arms embargo is weakened any further.

Presidential spokesman Jean Mustelli said Mr. Mitterrand told the cabinet meeting he was astonished at the unilateral nature of the U.S. action and "had questioned the serious consequences of such a decision."

Government spokesman Nicolas Sarkozy said Foreign Minister Alain Juppe reiterated the "great concern" the French government felt at the new U.S. policy.

Communists take early lead in Nepal elections

KATHMANDU (AFP) — An opposition Communist Party took an early lead over the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) Wednesday, as the first results of parliamentary elections in this remote mountain kingdom trickled in.

The Nepal-Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) won 10 of the 16 seats declared so far out of 205 in parliament, and was reportedly leading in 35 other constituencies.

In the capital the opposition party had taken six of the seven seats up for grabs and looked set for a clean sweep.

Of the other declared seats

munist faction, three to the rightist Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and one to the NC, the Election Commission said.

The NC was leading in 11 constituencies and the RPP in 10.

As predicted by analysts, the NCP-UML was comfortably ahead in the Kathmandu Valley area — which includes Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur — where 136 candidates contested 12 seats.

In Kathmandu, NCP-UML Chairman Man Mohan Adhikari, who contested from two constituencies, has already won a seat.

Balladur proposes shorter presidential term

PARIS (R) — French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur proposed constitutional reforms Wednesday including a shorter presidential term and wider use of referendum.

"We need a more democratic state," Mr. Balladur wrote in an article in the French daily Le Monde. Mr. Balladur is expected to be a candidate for the 1995 election to succeed President Francois Mitterrand.

Mr. Balladur wrote that the seven-year presidential term should either be made non-renewable or cut to five years. Mr. Mitterrand, approaching the end of his second term, made a similar proposal before he came to power in 1981.

The reform "would allow the people to referee more frequently on the great national questions," Mr. Balladur wrote.

The premier also said the use of referendums, a presidential prerogative, should be extended, perhaps by letting the minority in parliament request a popular vote once a year.

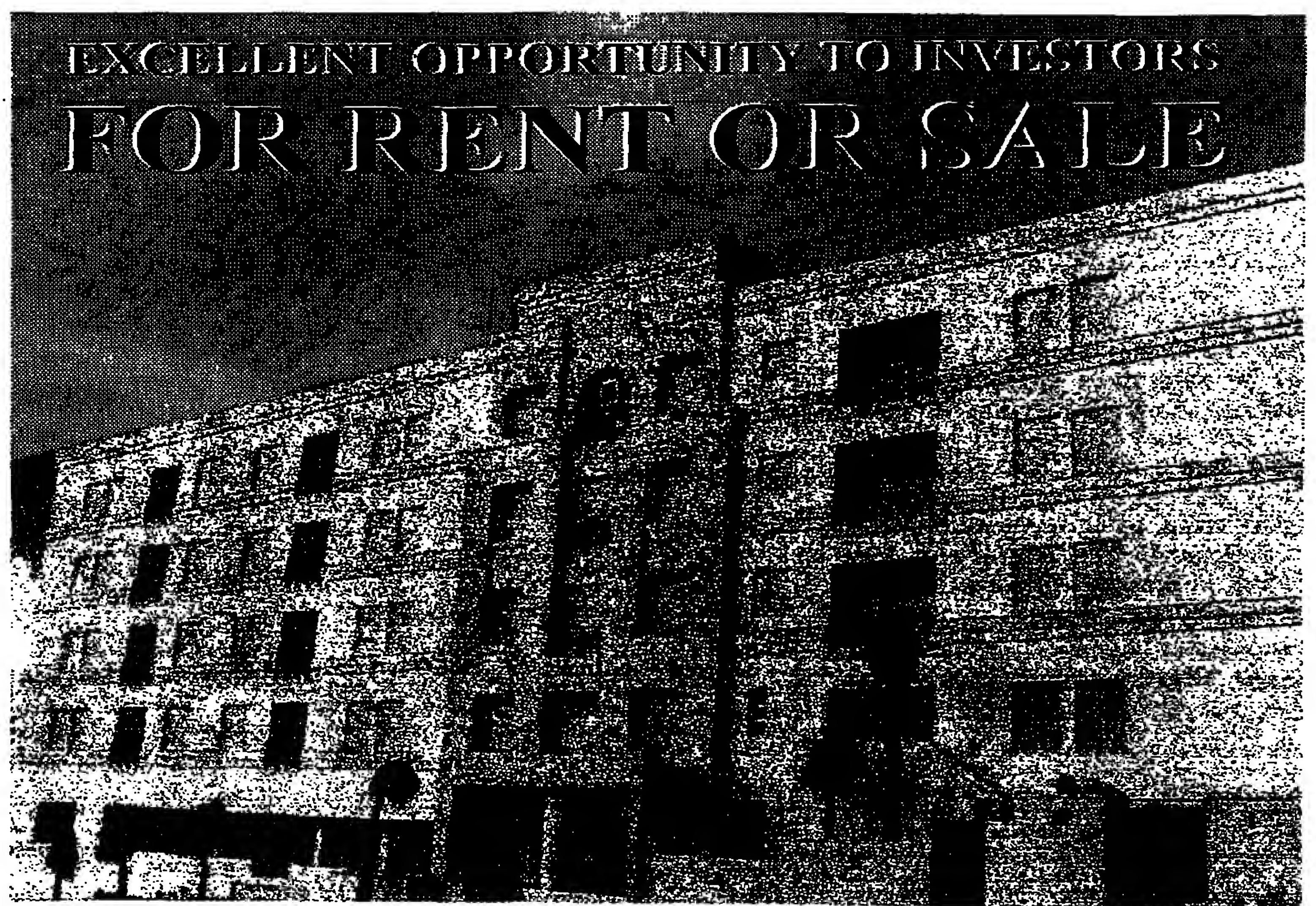
Mr. Balladur also said citizens should have more access to a constitutional watchdog and that links between the government and parliament should be made more flexible, perhaps by limiting procedures allowing the government to push bills through parliament.

Meanwhile former Presi-

dent Valery Giscard d'Estaing Wednesday criticised squabbling by leaders on the French right over the 1995 presidential election and said he would decide only in February whether to run himself.

"I think the (ruling) majority will win the presidential election, but certainly not in the way its leaders are setting about it at the moment," he said in a radio interview.

Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Balladur, both from the right-wing Gaullist party, are locked in bitter rivalry to be the main conservative candidate to succeed Socialist President Francois Mitterrand in May 1995.



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The View from Academia

Islam between a rock and a hard place

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

ONE CANNOT but feel sorry for Islam today. Not that the religion itself is in any more serious danger than it has ever been, or that its pure essence has been, or will ever be, significantly affected by any negative influence, be it external or internal. No. Deepdown, Islam is as valid, alive, attractive and powerful as it has been since the days of the Prophet Mohammad. It is true, of course, that since its birth in Mecca some 14 centuries ago, it has had its ups and downs, its flow and ebb and its inauspicious days. It is also true that during many of its inauspicious days, it has sustained some bruises and injuries. But it has always survived, recuperated, risen, asserted itself and endured more forcefully than ever. Ultimately, the bruises and injuries are superficial; the core always remains intact.

However, surface bruises and injuries can be both extremely uncomfortable and upsetting. At this particular moment in history, in which Islam is passing through one of its most difficult stages, it is at the receiving end of many vicious influences, from both the outside and the inside, from its critics and foes as well as, ironically and sadly, its proponents and supporters. The most disturbing thing that is happening to Islam these days (or to its image, to be more accurate) is the distortion and misrepresentation of it, both deliberate and unintentional.

Extremely, the distortion is worldwide; but it is most vigorously and visibly seen in the Occident. Today, the West is more powerful and dynamic — politically, economically, militarily, socially and culturally — than most other countries in the world. Its image of and position towards Islam and the Islamic World will most likely be more delicate and consequential than those of less dynamic and less powerful countries. Much of the West's vision and many of its foreign-relation schemes and acts vis-a-vis Islamic countries stem directly from its conception of Islamic culture and society, a conception which has been largely impressionistic, superficial, distortive and reductive — i.e., a misconception.

Several noted scholars have studied the matter at length, and the evidence and the facts about the distortion and misrepresentation of Islam in the West are well-known. Distinguished writers like Abbas Mahmoud Al Akkad and Edward Said have argued the case against "Orientalism" very eloquently and persuasively, pointing out in meticulous detail the images, modes of thinking, assumptions, methods, strategies and theories. Western Orientalists employ (consciously as well as inadvertently) to fix, control, oppress, efface, reduce and negate Islam and the East. As an Americanist, I am extremely fond of Jonathan Edwards. His philosophical essays and sermons (including his eternal masterpiece, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God") are exemplary in their depth of vision, intellectual excellence and beauty of expression. The other day, however, I was going over an essay he wrote on the Prophet Mohammad. I was both shocked and appalled. His argument is pathetically superficial; the expression is hopelessly prosaic; the assumptions are irretrievably misguided and nonsensical; the essay is nothing but a boring amalgam of stereotypical images and clichés — no facts, no analysis, no depth.

Not much has changed since the days of Edwards and earlier days. Most Occidental studies of Islam and Islamic societies, most press reports and features, most T.V. series, most movies are still far from acceptable. The image of the blacks (in fiction, on T.V., in Hollywood) has improved remarkably; and so has the image of Hispano, and even the Oriental. But that of the Arab or the Muslim has not much changed. The most recent example is Arnold Schwarzenegger's True Lies, which American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has come out strongly against both in the USA and abroad through its regional offices. There

is no end to defamation and distortion.

This is not to discount some of the brighter aspects of the picture and some of the positive steps and trends which we have seen, and still see, emerge. The appointment of a Muslim Imam in the U.S. military establishment a year or so ago, the U.S. president's congratulatory message to Muslims on the occasion of the Eid this past year, the statement by the U.S. Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs to the U.S. Congress on May 13, 1993 that "Islam, one of the greatest world religions, is not our enemy," and President Clinton's declaration, "we respect Islam," in his eloquent speech delivered at the Jordanian Parliament a couple of weeks ago are significant developments. They are a few examples (in one sphere and in one Western country) of the many others that are happening in Europe and America in many arenas and spheres, and in many countries. We greatly welcome such positive gestures and we would like to see them reflected at the level of deeds, acknowledging at the same time that much still needs to be rectified and corrected.

The causes of Western distortion and misrepresentation of Islam are as varied as the motives behind them: some distort and misrepresent because they simply do not know any better (out of ignorance or naïveté), some because they are reckless and irresponsible, some because they think they are cute, some because they produce mediocre and cheap texts and scripts, some because they are blindly ultra-nationalist, some because they are outrightly racist, and some for malicious intents and purposes.

But some distort and misrepresent (and we should not forget this) because they see Islam distorted and misrepresented in its own home and at the hands of its own proponents and supporters.

Which brings me to the second (and even more unsettling) level of distortion, the inner. Quite simply, we in the Arab/Islamic World do not live up to the true image of Islam. In fact, in all honesty I think we have failed Islam miserably. By "we," I do not mean each and every person of us, for there are always exceptions.

The way I see it, people in the Arab/Islamic World (excluding of course those who hold other faiths) can be divided into four groups. The first (let's call it A) refers to those who know the religion very well and who apply it constantly in their everyday life. They say what they mean and mean what they say. These people are at peace with themselves and with the world; they are amiable, kind, reasonable, open-minded, efficient, attractive and impressive. They are strong believers and quite uncompromising when it comes to the essentials of their faith. But they are tolerant and humane. At best their number may amount 10 to 15 per cent.

The second group comprises those who have politicised Islam. These are political parties of sorts. They know Islam better than the average Muslim and they use it to serve their own purposes. Individuals who belong to this group (let's call it B) are not all alike. Some are more extreme than others and more radical, depending on the political circumstances around them. In my opinion, their number does not exceed 10 per cent, even though they can be quite influential at times and have followers who take them to be religious (as opposed to political) leaders. Many of these individuals are quite outspoken and daring. Their popularity rises and falls depending on a variety of political, economic and social factors. They thrive most, it seems, during times of hardship and unrest.

The third group (C) is also a minority. These are Arabs and Muslims who follow secular ideologies mainly imported from outside the Arab/Islamic World. They constitute a power, it seems in the fifties and sixties of this

century. Generally, they do not value Islam. Some of them are quite hostile towards it, some are cynical about it, and some trivialise it. Most of them do not think that it works. This group, whose number does not exceed 10 per cent, has significantly weakened recently. Generally, they know about Islam what they need to criticise and attack.

The rest, the major bulk, constitute group D. These are the common, average Muslims. On the whole, they do not know their religion well; what they know they know on the basis of hearsay and casual exposure (i.e. reading, lectures, talk shows, etc.). On the whole also, they are not constant practitioners: Many go to the mosque on Friday, many do not; many perform the daily prayers, many do not; many apply the values of religion once in a while, many do not. They are middle-of-the-road people. Deepdown, they like Islam and think of themselves as Muslims. At the level of belief, they consider themselves faithful; at the level of practice they admit they are lax. These are not necessarily the uneducated. Far from it, for many of them hold university degrees and important jobs: university students, teachers, drivers, housewives, etc. As in the other groups, persons belonging to this group are not all alike. What they have in common, however, is their humble knowledge of religion and their flexible sense of morality. They can be easily swayed at the level of word (i.e. they often say what they do not mean and mean what they do not say) and the level of deed (i.e. they often do what they say they should not do and do not do what they say they should do), but not at the level of faith. Many of them say, "I am a Muslim, but not a good Muslim" (i.e. unpractising).

Inside the Arab/Islamic World, the problem lies with D, not with B or C, for B and C have existed since the time of the Prophet Mohammad. D is responsible because of the tenuousness, and weakness of its position.

First of all, it allows itself to be used and manipulated by B and C. Secondly, because of its blandness, carefree and complacent attitude, it leaves ample space for B and C to flourish and prosper. Thirdly, because D is unassertive, unexpressive and therefore invisible, those who view the Arab/Islamic World from the outside will recognise only what B says and does or what C says and does — hence some of the erroneous, faulty, fragmented and incomplete images of Islam abroad. D is hardly visible to people from inside the Islamic World; how can it be seen from the outside?

The solution lies with D. It is time for people belonging to it to take themselves seriously, educate themselves about their religion and take a stand. D must be turned into A. The educational institutions' family, the school and the university bear a responsibility here. A lot of people in our part of the world think religion is either too difficult to understand or too unattractive to study. This is a mistake because a great deal of what we do and do not do depends on our knowledge and practice of it. Our educational institutions need to change the attitude of students towards religion. It is an important subject, attractive, rewarding and sophisticated. The error we have made is that just as we have left medicine for the doctor to specialise in and practice we left Shari'a (Islamic studies) for the Shari'a specialist, with the crucial difference, of course, that medicine in our society sought by the most competitive and qualified students, while Shari'a is sought by the less competitive and qualified. This is a fault in our educational system we have to rectify. Everyone should know and study Islam. Otherwise we will be at the mercy of others and will fall prey to our ignorance, complacency and aloofness.

And perhaps if we distort and misrepresent less ourselves and put an end to distortion and misrepresentation of Islam in our society, others will distort less and misrepresent less. Charity begins at home.

Unity above politics

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's speech to the nation Tuesday was not only a genuine historical account of Jordanian politics on the conflict with Israel, but also an eye opener on the new era of peace in the country and the region as well as its implications. The thrust of the Royal message to Jordanians and others was that the country and people have made a choice in favour of peace with its neighbour Israel in a most democratic way. The majority of the people, the monarch noted, have spoken in no uncertain terms that henceforth they would like to live in peace with all our neighbours. "It is imperative that the minority opposition respects and observes the opinion of the majority except within what is prescribed by the Constitution, the laws and the (national) Charter," the King said, cautioning Jordanians who had reservations about the terms of the accord in part or in whole or rejected the idea of peace with Israel altogether.

It is fair to note at this juncture that we cannot dump all opposition forces altogether since some of them oppose the accord as a matter of principle while others accept the accord in principle but find some elements in it wanting. The dialogue with the latter group is and should be continuing while the framework for dealing with the ideologies should be defined in a way that would indeed exclude the language of "intellectual terrorism," from being used in it. In this regard, we fully agree that "the pulpits of God" should not serve as "places for irresponsible expression in the name of Islam, which is innocent of all terrorism, oppression and the charges of infidelity and belittlement."

Thus, the stage can be set for the "great historic changes," within the country and the region as a whole to take place. To face those changes, though, Jordanians should join hands in unity, vision and hard work. The majority should extend its hands once again to the minority and call on them to join in the collective effort to move forward rather than backward. We all have a new beginning to grapple with and much to tackle in the days ahead.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

KHAIRI MANSOUR a writer for Al Dustour bitterly criticised the United States and Britain for adamantly opposing the lifting of the U.N. sanctions on Iraq. Maintaining the embargo despite Iraq's recognition of Kuwait is unjustified at all and indicates that London and Washington must have other reasons behind their present stand, said the writer. The two Western powers which continue to brag about human rights are themselves violating these rights by starving the Iraqi people whose only fault is that they are living in their own country around the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, said the writer. By recognising Kuwait, Iraq has removed all obstacles in the way of the lifting of the sanctions which embarrassed the U.S. and British who have been adamant in their positions against Baghdad over the past four years, continued the writer. "What would be the position of the Arab states which maintain their embargo on Iraq now that Baghdad has complied with all the requirements of the international legitimacy?" asked the writer. He said the Iraqis are facing untold sufferings and are awaiting salvation.

MAHMOUD RIMAWI a columnist for Al Ra'i daily discussed Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's visit to the United States in the wake of the congressional elections which came out in favour of the Republican party. Rabin is going to the U.S. to find out the extent of the effects of the elections results on the reported postponement of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's Middle East tour, said the writer. Rabin seems to be concerned over any delay in U.S. mediation efforts aimed at securing peace with Syria and is out to sound the U.S. administration's out on its next moves, he added. Furthermore, the Israeli premier is in Washington in order to find out the impact of the views of the new set-up in Congress on future American financial aid to the Jewish state, said the writer. The writer said that Rabin lost no time in pursuing questions of vital importance to Israel, and through Israel's many friends in the United States he is bound to secure continued American assistance to the Jewish state.

By Deborah Tannen

WASHINGTON — I put the question to a journalist who had written a vitriolic attack on a leading feminist researcher: "Why do you need to make others wrong for you to be right?" Her response: "It's an argument!"

That is the problem. More and more these days, journalists, politicians and academics treat public discourse as an argument — not in the sense of making an argument, but in the sense of having one, of having a fight.

When people have arguments in private life, they are not trying to understand what the other person is saying. They are listening for weaknesses in logic to leap on, points, they can distort to make the other look bad. We all do this when we are angry, but it is the best model for public intellectual interchange?

This breakdown of the boundary between public and private is contributing to what I have come to think of as a culture of critique.

Fights have winners and losers. If you are fighting to win, the temptation is great to deny facts that support your opponent's views and present only those facts that support your own.

At worst, there is a temptation to lie. We accept this style of arguing because we believe we can tell when someone is lying. But we can't. Paul Ekman, a psychologist at the University of California at San Francisco, has found that even when people are very sure they can tell whether or not someone is dissembling, their judgments are as likely as not to be wrong.

If public discourse is a fight, every issue must have two sides — no more, no less. And it is crucial to show "the other side," even if one has to scour the margins of science or the fringes of lunacy to find it. The culture of critique is based on the belief that opposition leads to truth.

And because people are presumed to enjoy watching a fight, the most extreme views are presented,

A destructive culture of critique



since they make the best show. But it is a myth that opposition leads to truth when truth does not reside on one side or the other but is rather a crystal of many sides.

Because the culture of critique encourages people to attack and often misrepresent others, those others must waste time and creativity correcting the misrepresentations and defending themselves. Serious scholars have had to spend years of their lives writing books proving that the Holocaust happened, because a few fanatics who claim it didn't have been given a public forum.

Those who provide the platform know that these people say it, simply put, not true, but rationalise the dissemination of lies as showing "the other side." The determination to find another side can spread misinformation.

The culture of critique

has given rise to the journalistic practice of confronting prominent people with criticism couched as others' views. Meanwhile, the interviewer has planted an accusation in readers' or viewers' minds. The theory seems to be that when provoked, people are spurred to eloquence and self-revelation. Perhaps some are. But others are unable to say what they know because they are hurt, and begin to sputter when their sense of fairness is outraged. In those cases, opposition is not the path to truth.

When people in power know that what they say will be scrutinised for weaknesses and probably distorted, they become more guarded. Public figures who once gave long, free-wheeling press conference now limit themselves to reading brief statements.

When less information

gets communicated, opposition does not lead to truth.

Opposition also limits information when only those who are adept at verbal sparring take part in public discourse; and those who cannot handle it, or do not like it, decline to participate.

This winnowing process is evident in graduate schools, where many talented students drop out because what they expected to be a community of intellectual inquiry turned out to be a ritual game of attack and counterattack.

In many university classrooms, "critical thinking" means reading someone's life work, then ripping it to shreds. Though critique is surely one form of critical thinking, so are integrating ideas from disparate fields and examining the context out of which they grew.

Opposition does not lead to truth when we ask only "what's wrong with this argument?" and never "what can we use from this in building a new theory, and a new understanding?"

Several years ago I was on a television talk show with a representative of the men's movement. I didn't foresee any problem, since there is nothing in my work that is anti-male. But in the room where guests gather before the show I found a man wearing a shirt and tie and a floor-length skirt, with waist-length red hair. He politely introduced himself and told me he liked my book.

Then he added: "When I get out there, I'm going to attack you. But don't take it personally. That's why they invite me on, so that's what I'm going to do."

When the show began, I spoke only a sentence or two before this man nearly

jumped out of his chair, threw his arms before him in gesture of anger and began shrieking — first attacking me, but soon moving on to rail against women.

The most disturbing thing about his hysterical ranting was what it sparked in the studio audience: They too became vicious, attacking not me (I hadn't had a chance to say anything) and not him (who wants to tangle with someone who will scream at you?) but the other guests: unsuspecting women who had agreed to come on the show to talk about problems communicating with their spouses.

This is the most dangerous aspect of modeling intellectual interchange as a fight. It contributes to an atmosphere of animosity that spreads like a fever. In a society where people express their anger by shooting, the result of demonising those with whom we disagree can be truly demonic.

I am not suggesting that journalists stop asking tough questions necessary to get at the facts, even if those questions may appear challenging.

And of course it is the responsibility of the media to represent serious opposition when it exists, and of intellectuals everywhere to explore potential weaknesses in others' arguments.

But when opposition becomes the overwhelming avenue of inquiry, when the lust for opposition equals extreme views and obscures complexity, when our eagerness to find weaknesses blinds us to strengths, when the atmosphere of animosity precludes respect and polite relations with one another, then the culture of critique is stifling us.

If we could move beyond it, we would move closer to the truth.

The writer is professor of linguistics at Georgetown University and author of "You Just Don't Understand." This essay, based on remarks at Renaissance Weekend in Hilton Head, South Carolina, last year, is reprinted from The New York Times.

Kuwait ready to deal with Israel, not for talks with Iraq

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — Kuwait has said it was prepared to deal with Israel but ruled out dialogue with Iraq, its Arab neighbour which invaded the emirate in 1990.

Lifting the direct Arab trade boycott of Israel was "just a matter of time," Information Minister Saud Nasser Al Sabah said in a newspaper reports published here Wednesday.

"The existence of Israel has become a fact," and "as long as our security and stability are linked to the United States and its interests, it is only natural to be linked with Israel, America's ally," he added.

"Arab countries must take a collective decision to deal with Israel before being forced to do so," he added. The six Gulf Arab monarchies have lifted an indirect boycott of Israel but a ban on direct trade remains in place. "This decision is the Arab League's concern," said Sheikh Saud.

"I want to make it clear that lifting the boycott of Israel has become a matter of time after the bilateral recognitions between Israel and the Arab parties in the struggle," Sheikh Saud said, according to the pro-

government Al Anba daily. Arab states had forbidden dealings with Israel since its creation in 1948. The Arab League established the Damascus-based boycott office in May 1951, to monitor the ban.

All economic contacts with the Jewish state were banned and companies which had dealings with it were blacklisted in the Arab World.

Kuwait and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman — have dropped the secondary boycott rules related to blacklisting foreign firms.

But the six oil-rich nations have said they would continue to prohibit direct dealings with Israel until it has resolved its disputes with its immediate Arab neighbours.

Sheikh Saud's remarks, however, indicated that Kuwait did not plan to wait indefinitely before taking other steps which would help end Israel's political and commercial isolation in the Middle East.

The United States and some of its Western allies have been pushing the Arabs to abandon the embargo as a goodwill gesture that would help push forward the peace

process. "The existence of Israel is a fact," Sheikh Saud told Al Anba. "Our security and stability are connected to the United States and Britain and our interests lie in tightening our ties with them."

Turning to Iraq, he said: "We refuse all contact, of whatever kind, with the present regime in place in Iraq and we have no intention of having any contact."

He welcomed Monday's renewal of the U.N. sanctions in force against Iraq since the invasion of August 1990.

"We have explained our clear stand to all allied and friendly countries stating that the Iraqi recognition of Resolution 833 is only a simple part of the international demands which have to be fulfilled," said the minister.

He described Iraq's recognition of Kuwait last week, in line with the U.N. Security Council resolution, as nothing more than "theatrics" and noted that the two countries had had diplomatic relations and embassies for 30 years.

"We are dealing with a regime that does not recognise international law and has no commitment to treaties," said Sheikh Saud.

Amnesty voices concern on increased hangings in Syria

NICOSIA (AP) — Amnesty International said Wednesday it was greatly concerned about an apparent increase in executions in Syria last year and a lack of fair trial in death-penalty cases.

The group, in a news release also reiterated its longstanding concern about the cases of thousands of political prisoners in Syrian prisons, some of them jailed for more than 20 years.

The statement came after the first visit to Syria by a delegation from the Nobel Prize-winning group for talks about human rights with high-level officials. Amnesty staff have visited the country in the past, but usually met with lower-level officials.

At least 14 people were reported to have been executed in 1993, said Amnesty's Kamal Samari. Of these, nine were convicted of rape or murder and five were executed for setting fire to a prison in March 1993, killing 57 inmates.

There were two executions in 1992. So far in 1994, two executions have been reported, Amnesty said. Some executions go unreported or are not known until some time later.

In the prison-arson case, "we think the speed with which the five were tried and executed may have undermined the international safe-

guards required in these cases," Mr. Samari told the Associated Press.

State-run news media said at the time that the five were hanged after being convicted on charges of torching the prison in a vain effort to cover up a drug-distribution ring that ran inside the facility, which houses common criminals.

Executions in Syria are usually carried out by hanging.

Syria also has introduced a new law extending the death penalty to first-time drug offenders. Amnesty pointed out in its news release, which coincided with the 24th anniversary Wednesday of President Hafez Al Assad's rise to power.

"Amnesty International is greatly concerned about the new law, the apparent increase in the number of executions in 1993, and the lack of fair trial in capital cases," the organisation said.

During its trip to Syria last month, the Amnesty delegation held the "first ever substantive talks with Syrian authorities covering all its human rights concerns" and called for "ending violations in the country."

The visitors met with the ministers of interior, justice and health as well as the president of the state security court and other senior

judges. Syrian officials "gave an undertaking to look into the dossier submitted by Amnesty International and respond to the issues and cases raised by the organization," Amnesty said in its statement.

Amnesty described as "positive" Syria's release of thousands of political prisoners since 1991, but said there had been little progress made in reviewing the cases of others, some of whom have been jailed for more than two decades.

Amnesty said that during its visit, the delegation raised the cases of more than a thousand people, including:

- Prisoners detained without trial;
- Unfair trials;
- Prisoners held even after expiry of their sentence;
- Torture allegations;
- The cases of people who simply "disappeared."

The number of political prisoners in Syria runs in the thousands, Amnesty says, conceding that an exact figure is impossible to obtain under current circumstances.

Some of the longest-standing political prisoners in Syria are top politicians who were jailed after Mr. Assad's bloodless coup in 1970. He has gradually been ordering their release, often for health reasons.

U.N. says Iraqi move significant

(Continued from page 1)

said. "Saddam's tower" in Baghdad is billed as the tallest in the Middle East. The chimneys of the Baghdad clock can now be heard up to five kilometres away.

There is also a two-level bridge, the first of its kind in Iraq, and the government has unveiled plans for what it says will be the largest mosque in the history of Islam.

President Saddam said he was determined to continue his construction drive, with or without foreign currency. Anything that rose above the ground in Iraq terrified the United States because it showed Iraq was steadfast despite the sanctions, he said.

"The (Americans and Zionists) would like to see Iraqis... disappointed, frustrated, mourning and crying over debris and ruins," he said.

"This is a standard of conduct for those who are bankrupt of civilisation and culture. Is this the standard of a superpower? Is this how it should behave?"

Malaysia on Wednesday demanded that the Security Council lift economic sanctions against Baghdad and stop "torturing" the Iraqis.

"To torture the Iraqis until they bring down (President) Saddam is to me most unfair," Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad told reporters.

Mr. Mahathir, speaking on his return home from an informal summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Coopera-

tion forum leaders in Indonesia, said the Iraqis had suffered enough from the sanctions.

Mr. Mahathir added that if Security Council members wanted President Saddam removed "let them do it."

"It is no point blaming Saddam for the sufferings of the Iraqis when Baghdad has shown its willingness to recognise Kuwait," Mr. Mahathir said.

Russia criticised Washington on Tuesday for its reluctance to ease the sanctions against Iraq, saying the U.S. stance reflected domestic political factors.

"Some countries take a position which is summed up by the words 'everything or nothing'," said senior Foreign Ministry official Vladimir Gudev in a reference to the United States.

"We think such tactics are dictated by internal political considerations of certain countries and has nothing in common with maintaining security in the Persian Gulf," he told a news briefing. "It could lead the situation into a dead end."

Mr. Gudev, first deputy head of the ministry's Middle East Department, said Moscow hoped to convince the United States to change its position.

Moscow worries that sweeping Republican Party electoral gains earlier this month, which gave it control over both houses of Congress, might persuade Presi-

dent Bill Clinton to alter his foreign policy.

Russia said last week that Washington's refusal to enforce the international arms embargo against Bosnia Muslims was triggered by the Democratic president's desire to appease the Republican legislature.

Russia advocates gradually lifting the sanctions imposed against Iraq.

Moscow believes that Iraq has done much to meet the conditions set by the United Nations for lifting sanctions.

The Security Council debate Monday had "shown positive elements but could have been much better," Mr. Gudev said.

The official said it was "difficult to imagine" a situation in which Moscow and Washington had a common point of view on the Gulf "where our two countries have their own interests," though he stressed that this did not mean the situation was deadlocked.

The recognition of Kuwait is "the first stone in achieving a settlement of the regional issue in its entirety," Mr. Gudev said. "In this perspective, we believe the Security Council must respond positively, or we risk a loss of the impetus" provided by Baghdad's initiative.

"Of course the recognition of Kuwait does not rule out putting pressure on Iraq, notably in the field of disarmament" as required by U.N. resolutions, he added.

American couples find babies in eastern Europe

By Kendall J. Wills
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Instinct took over.

Robert Kiggins stood in a small, spare room at Moscow's hospital No. 13, holding for the first time a blond-haired, blue-eyed 5-month-old boy. And he knew that a long search across two continents had finally delivered to him a son.

That summer day, Mr. Kiggins and his wife, Austa Devlin, met Alexander James Kiggins. Robert and Austa are Americans, Alexander James is Russian.

"We had been holding him and walking around with him and he was getting a little drowsy," Mr. Kiggins says. "So I did what came naturally — I sang a lullaby, the same lullaby sung to me when I was young, and he went to sleep."

Their private journey matched the childless couple with a Russian boy whose mother wanted to give him away. Today, increasing numbers of American couples are following the same path to the former communist country.

Fueling the demand is the shortage in the United States of healthy, white babies. A newly opened Russia provides a ready source of orphaned and abandoned infants.

The boom has been picking up speed since Oct. 1991, when Russia began relaxing its regulations governing foreign adoptions. More than 1,700 Americans adopted children in Russia in the first 2½ years, and the pace of Russian adoptions is increasing this year.

Despite Moscow's stipulations that only nonethnically Russians with minor to severe developmental problems may be adopted by foreigners, many healthy babies are being brought out of Russia, either because Russian doctors knowingly falsify documents or because medical problems that are easily correctable in the West are judged serious by Russian standards, says Barbara Zen, a spokeswoman for the New York Adoptive Parents Committee.

Decisions to adopt from Russia follow a logical progression, says Felicia Van Praagh, director of International Adoption at Spence-Chapin, the New York agency used by Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin.

"The first urge of many couples is to have their own biological child," she says. "When they consider adoption, they think of adopting domestically, and they find out how hard it is. Then they look internationally, where many move very happily into programmes of interracial adoption."

"But for many others, it is important to them that the children at least look like them physically. If that is a priority, they look to Eastern Europe."

Because of Moscow's restrictions, some couples prefer to look to other countries. But for those couples Spence-Chapin has sent to Russia, all have come back with babies, Ms. Van Praagh says.

Another large adoption agency, Holt International Children's Service, has had similar success. Couples sometimes drop out of the Russia programme, says Suzanne Lloyd, programme assistant for Russian Adoptions, either because women become pregnant while waiting for a match or because they opt for other Holt programmes where infants are more readily available.

Ms. Devlin and Mr. Kiggins are typical of many couples. In their mid-40s and married for nine years, they had trouble conceiving.

"We always knew we were open to adoption," Ms. Devlin says. So they tried first to arrange a private adoption in the United States by placing newspaper ads. Despite setbacks, they came close several times during the year and a half they sought a baby in America.

"You get all kinds of scams, including people who wanted \$5,000 up front. But even if people who call are sincere, the women who are pregnant sometimes decide, for whatever reason, not to give up the baby," Ms. Devlin says. "It's understandable for them. But it was heartbreaking for us."

Finally, in late November 1993, they attended an in-

formational meeting for International Adoptions at Spence-Chapin's New York offices. Between that point and the time about nine months later that they brought Alexander to their queens apartment. They had to negotiate regulatory hurdles designed to weed out couples who wouldn't make good parents.

Medical checkups, approval by the Child Abuse Clearinghouse, fingerprinting for FBI background checks, immigration applications, a home study conducted by a social worker, filling out questionnaires about the type of child sought, and completing financial and family background profiles.

The cost, too, is significant. Mr. Van Praagh of Spence-Chapin says the total costs, including trips to pick up the child, average \$16,000 to \$18,000.

"It's an expensive process and therefore it rules out some families, and that's sad," Mr. Van Praagh says.

For Ms. Devlin and Mr. Kiggins, the cost was something they accepted in exchange for the comfort of having an established agency handling details overseas.

Their choice of Russia was made with the medical deliberation that both Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin bring to their work as lawyers. Neither has Russian heritage. Mr. Kiggins is a mix of Irish, French and German ancestry, and Ms. Devlin's heritage is English and Irish. They simply wanted a baby who looked like them.

Russia, Ms. Devlin says, "just seemed more familiar" than other adoption programmes in Asia and Latin America. "You have to make a

Robert Kiggins grew up during the cold war, fully expecting one day to have to fight the Russians. Now he holds a Russian baby in his arms, sings a lullaby to him and calls him son. Mr. Kiggins and his wife are among a growing number of Americans adopting babies behind what was once called the iron curtain.

decision whether you want to go to a country where your kid will look more like you or foreign," she adds. When a match was finally made, the couple learned very little about the boy they would adopt. They were told he was only several months old and had a minor heart murmur that was expected to correct itself as he developed.

They learned his parents were Ukrainians in their 20s. The mother was unmarried and had several other children. Little was known about the father. Both parents were said to be in good health and had no alcohol or drug addictions.

"We don't exactly know why they were giving up their child," Mr. Kiggins says. He says the mother came to Moscow to have the baby and wrote a letter while at the hospital, saying she wanted to give up the baby for adoption.

With that incomplete information and a photo of a boy known as Ivan at hospital No. 13, Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin gathered baby bottles, milk formula, diapers and their hopes and set off for the first of two required trips to Moscow.

Although not all agencies require a second trip, Spence-Chapin said it can take several weeks between the time prospective parents file applications with Moscow authorities and the time they are allowed to take the child home. It is often more convenient and cheaper to return later.

The adoption, which must be approved by Russian courts before U.S. immigration officials will issue a visa, becomes final before the couple leaves Russia. Upon returning to the United States, parents need only file court papers to secure the child's

citizenship rights.

Once Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin had held Alexander on their first visit, the subsequent separation was particularly difficult for the new parents.

"It was really upsetting leaving him," Ms. Devlin said during an interview in New York between the two trips. But she says they knew it wouldn't be long before they'd go back and bring him home.

Throughout the apartment were scattered signs of a newborn child — a carton of diapers in the corner, baby photos on the table, a waiting crib in the bedroom, and baby bottle nipples being sterilized on the stove — but no sounds of crying.

"Since we met him" on the first visit, Mr. Kiggins acknowledges, "I had a sense of loss about missing the last month" while the couple waited to return. On the return trip, the Russian hospital staff gave the couple a party, with chocolate cake and champagne. The nurses offered practical information about the baby's schedule and sent them off with a supply of special Russian yogurt.

Weeks later, after Alexander had settled into his appointed crib and exercised his lungs in the five-room apartment, Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin showed the telltale signs of harried parents of a demanding infant.

Well-practiced at the art of burping and even changing diapers in airplane restrooms, Ms. Devlin, who is on leave from her job, says her days now are busier than they ever were at work. Even so, the pair occasionally take time to reflect.

Later on, they say, they hope to see Alexander learn Russian, and perhaps learn more about his biological parents.

"It's ironic," Mr. Kiggins says. "Having grown up during the cold war, going through the Cuban missile crisis, — the Russians were the big enemy. And now of course we owe that country personally, the country that was supposed to terminate my life gave me a new one — a child."

8 executives attend PLO meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian National Authority on every piece of territory that the Israeli enemy withdrew from.

He quickly corrected himself, saying "which the Israeli withdrew from."

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Wednesday he had ordered a new inquiry into the activities of Palestinian security agents in East Jerusalem.

"There are signs of PLO police activity in Jerusalem," Mr. Shahal told Israel Radio. "I will not allow it and I have given orders to arrest any suspect."

"There will not be two security systems in Jerusalem," he vowed.

Palestinian preventive security police chief Jibril Rajub has allegedly started an operation in the Haram Al Sharaf complex.

It is common knowledge in Jerusalem that the Palestinians shun the Israeli police and now take their complaints to Mr. Rajub's agents.

Mr. Shahal also announced an inquiry in September after police admitted in court that

Berlusconi

(Continued from page 12)

designed to curb public spending.

Labour Minister Clemente Mastella said after talks with union leaders that Mr. Berlusconi would meet them either next Wednesday or Thursday. "The climate is changing and we have until Dec. 2 to try to avert the general strike," he said.

Mr. Berlusconi said the government must stick to its plan to send a message to international financial markets that it was serious about cutting a \$100 billion deficit.

The government won a confidence vote in the chamber Monday night, 321-131, on a proposed amnesty on illegal construction expected to bring in \$3.3 billion from back taxes and fines.

But things won't be so easy when the budget plan reaches the senate. There, the coalition government of the federalist Northern League, right-wing National Alliance and Mr. Berlusconi-formed Forza Italia falls short of a majority. The budget must be passed by Dec. 31.

It is a prospect guaranteed to cause tremors at the White House, given Mr. Dole's record as minority leader during the first two years of the Clinton presidency, when he was Mr. Clinton's sharpest critic.

But as Republicans gained the seven seats needed to win a Senate majority, Mr. Dole sounded a conciliatory note, saying Republicans were ready to work with Mr. Clinton.

"We intend to work with the president because we only have one president at a time," Mr. Dole said. But Republicans are reading the election results as a rejection of Mr. Clinton's programmes and a vote for less government, and will be promoting their own programmes such as a balanced budget amendment to the constitution and a rewrite of the crime bill passed in the last session.

Mr. Dole made clear two years ago that he would be a terrier snapping at Mr. Clinton's heels, relishing the role after acting as a loyal lieutenant for President George Bush.

"The good news (for Clinton) is that he's getting a honeymoon in Washington. The bad news is that Bob Dole is going to be his chaperon," he said on election night in 1992.

It was Mr. Dole who put the nail in the coffin of Mr. Clinton's \$16 billion economic stimulus plan. It was Mr. Dole who played a lead role in killing health care reform and who led a Republican filibuster offensive that blocked Clinton-supported

Dole well-placed to seek U.S. presidency

By William Scally
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The Republican takeover of the Senate propels the party's top elected official, senator Bob Dole, into the ideal spot to challenge Bill Clinton for the U.S. presidency in 1996.

Mr. Dole will resume the post of majority leader that he yielded when the Democrats regained control of the Senate in 1986.

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The magic world of CD-ROMs

By Jean-Claude Elias

Of all the additions one can upgrade his or her PC (personal computer) with, a CD-ROM drive may be the most interesting, the most fashionable and has the highest value-for-money ratio.

CD-ROM is an acronym for Compact Disc-Read Only Memory. The media itself is physically identical to the audio and music CD. The optical recording technology is practically the same, but the data — i.e. the information on the disk — has a different internal format.

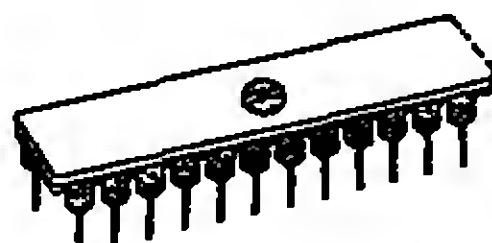
CD drives are available in Jordan at prices ranging from JD 150 to JD 450, while the software — the disk itself — varies from as little as JD 30 up to JD 400.

A CD presents several advantages when compared to the traditional magnetic hard disk all PCs are fitted with. Capacity first — a CD can hold 600 to 800 MB (million characters) while the average hard disk is currently rated at 250 MB. The trend seems to indicate that a multi-layer CD, with a capacity of 6 GB (six billion characters) may be introduced on the market sometime next year. Hard disks are usually fixed while CDs are removable, giving users the possibility to build complete libraries.

Then comes reliability — this is really where the CD is superior to all other recording medias, including tapes. Because it is recorded on the CD through optical techniques, the data on the media is very safe and very unlikely to be altered with time. CDs are not affected by magnetic fields and have a wide tolerance to temperature and humidity variations. Manufacturers generally give a 20-year warranty. Although this sounds more theoretical than contractual, it also means that the user can actually expect to keep the CD for "a lifetime", as it is written on the inner label of the disk.

The most attractive aspect of CD-ROMs however is the software they contain. Publishers first offering

chip talk



was a multi-media encyclopedia. A very impressive application that puts a world of knowledge on a 20-gram, 4.75" CD-ROM, including a substantive amount of sound and music.

Currently, there are hundreds of titles available. Anything from very sophisticated games to the world atlas has been put on CD-ROM. At the recent METS (Middle East Technology Shows) in Amman, foreign language courses of CD-ROM were presented.

Famous motion pictures, like for instance the Beatles' A Hard Day's Night, are now available on CD-ROM. One can view the film on the PC screen and work inter-actively with it. Freeze any frame, choose sections to review, turn the lyrics on or off, display written information about the film alongside the viewing screen, capture images from the film in order to integrate them in other programmes and so on.

Software that normally would take several floppy disks to be distributed is now shipped on CD-ROM. The new Corel Draw, Microsoft Excel 5.0 and Access 2.0, to name only those, can be now purchased on CD-ROM.

For the publishers, CD-ROMs are not only a new product with significant profit in sight, it is also the certainty that their work won't be pirated as easily as regular magnetic disk are. Making illegal copies of CD-ROMs is expensive enough to deter the criminals.

The unspeakable in pursuit of the unbeatable

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

... OR THE AGE OF EXTREMES. Substance for a writer consists not merely of those realities he thinks he discovers; it consists even more of those realities which have been made available to him by the literature and idioms of his day and by the images that still have vitality in the literature of the past. Stylistically, a writer can express his feeling about a substance either by imitation or by parody. Learning from the existing landscape is a way of being revolutionary for an architect. Not the obvious way, which is to tear down Paris and begin again, as le Corbusier suggested in the 1920s, but another more tolerant way; that is to question how we look at things.

Architects are out of the habit of looking nonjudgmentally at the environment because orthodox modern architecture is progressive, utopian and puristic; it is dissatisfied with existing conditions.

One of the oldest themes in modern culture is the celebration of urban vitality, diversity and fullness of life; the life of the street that never stops. Throughout the late nineteenth century, and well into the twentieth, this urban romance crystallised around the street, which emerged as a primary symbol of modern life. The street was experienced as the medium in which the totality of modern material and spiritual forces could meet, clash, interfuse and work out their ultimate meanings and fates. Ironically,

however, within the space of a generation, the street now came to symbolise everything dingy, disorderly, sluggish, worn out, obsolete — everything that the dynamism and progress of modernity were supposed to leave behind.

We must strive to keep this "old" environment alive, because it is uniquely capable of nourishing modern experiences and values: The freedom of the city, an order that exists in a state of perpetual motion and change and the intense and complex face-to-face communication and communion. The practical conclusion of all this is that in our city life, for the sake of the modern we must preserve the old and resist the new.

To make the case for a new but old direction in architecture there is a need to assert that architecture depends in its perception and creation on past experiences and emotional association. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was undoubtedly a spectacular historical event. Even so, the restored political capital of Germany, is still drawing a good deal of its cultural dividends from the artistic capital accumulated some 70 years ago.

Lovers also miss the Berlin Wall. The same Berlin Wall that divided East from West and man from woman, and in keeping man and woman apart made of each of them a glorious other. And so, in a sick, sentimental sense, kept them together — a laughable notion that every hopeless, helpless romantic understands.

Smoking death toll to rise to 10 million people a year

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Smoking claims a victim every 10 seconds and despite an international campaign, the habit will kill 10 million people every year, a delegate to a cancer conference here said.

"In most countries the worst is yet to come," epidemiologist Richard Peto from Britain's Imperial Cancer Fund told The Times of India. "If the current smoking patterns persist, there will be 10 million deaths every year."

Dr. Peto, one of more than 6,000 participants at the International Cancer Congress, Asia's largest meeting on cancer, renewed warnings on the hazards of tobacco.

"Tobacco is the biggest

cause of adult death in developed countries. Over the next few decades, it may become the biggest cause of adult death in the world," he said.

"If cigarette smokers start young and do not stop, then about half of them will be killed by tobacco."

He said there was a "time bomb ticking away in developing countries" where smoking was on the rise due to ignorance, peer pressure and the common belief that it was a manly habit.

"In 1952, in China, it was estimated that one cigarette was smoked by a male every day. Twenty years later it went up to four... and in 1992 the average was 10," he said.

Dr. Peto predicted that by 2025 there would be two million smoking-related deaths a year in China.

Indian doctors told the meeting that ineffective government policies had failed to significantly reduce the tobacco habit in India in the last 25 years.

"India is one of the world's major tobacco producers and several ministries actively promote tobacco cultivation," Prakash Gupta of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research said.

The Indian Council of Medical Research has said tobacco is responsible for at least 108,000 cancer cases every year. 1.3 million cases of coronary heart disease and seven

million lung-related ailments.

The report said health warnings needed to be extended to other tobacco products and a ban on smoking extended in public places.

Tobacco advertisements are banned on the India's state radio and television and smoking prohibited on internal flights. The government earns about \$500 million from the industry every year in revenue.

The conference, organised by the Geneva-based International Union Against Cancer (UICC), was told by Australian specialist and UICC President-elect Nigel Gray that 30 per cent of cancer cases stemmed from tobacco.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

CURIOUS SUPERSTITIONS

★ **SUNDAY:** If somebody is born on Sunday, he is supposed to be protected from evils inflicted upon him and is capable of overcoming all the evil spirits without resorting to amulets or the like.

The day of birth is excluded.

If those born on Sunday are not idle human beings, they won't work without pay. Whoever weeps on Sunday will never laugh.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **WEDNESDAY:** Wednesday is the most convenient day for implementing projects or organising journeys.

One should never feel afraid of robbers or magicians on this very day as they enjoy their full time by having complete rest.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

RELIGION

— What's your religion? *Ma heya de'yannak?*
— I'm a Muslim. (a Christian), *Ana Muslim. (Massih)*
— We should all seek for goodness.

Yajib ann nas'a jamee'an elal-khayr.
— Morals are the soul of religion.

Al-akhlaaq heya roohul-ad'yan.
— Celebrate the praises of Your Lord and ask for forgiveness of Him.

Sabbah behamdi Rabbika wasstag'fir-ho.
— Woe to those who pray and who are careless in their prayers.

Waylon lif-musal'leen alla'theena hom ann salaatehim sahoon.
— But as for who feared the highness of his Lord and prohibited his soul from lust. Verily, paradise is the resort.

Wa'amma mann khaafa makama Rabbhi wa-nahan-nafa anil hawa, fa'innal jannata heyal ma'wa.
— He who does an atom's weight of good shall see it; and he who does an atom's weight of evil shall see it.

Mann ya'mal mithqala tharraten khayran yarab; wa-mann ya'mal mithqal tharraten sharran yarab.
— Love all, hate none, trust a few and be kind to your enemy.

Ahib al-jamee, wala takrah ahadan, wakon rahman-be'adaw'wik.

TIME FOR FUN

■ **TEACHER:** "Supposing I lay five eggs on the chair and five others on the table, how many will there be altogether?"

STUDENT: "But excuse me, sir, you cannot lay eggs."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

■ **JUDGE:** "Have you ever been arrested before?"
THIEF: "No."

JUDGE: "Why?"
THIEF: "Never been caught!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

■ **UNCLE:** "Name the four seasons."
LILLY: "Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

■ A famous British artist was critically ill. The doctor, having done all he could, closed his bag and prepared to leave.

"I'll see you in the morning," he said cheerfully.

"Sure, doctor," said the artist, "but will I see you?"

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Is it correct to say "Good morning, doctor?"
2. Upon the announcement of an engagement, who should be congratulated?

3. Name some of the so-called finger foods.
4. Should a man walk between two women?
5. Is it correct to seal a letter of introduction?
6. Should a lady assist a man in putting on his coat?
7. Should one say "Please and thank you" to servants?
8. Should the wife of a physician refer to her husband as doctor?
9. Do good manners require to leave some food on the plate?
10. Is it in good taste to apply rouge and powder in public?

PENCIL & PAPER GAMES

Categories

Think of a whole long list of categories and get all the players to write them down:

RIVERS
DEPARTMENT STORES
ACTORS
FOODS
SEASIDE RESORTS
WILD FLOWERS
OPERA SINGERS
POETS
MAKES OF MOTOR CAR
MOUNTAINS
CARTOONISTS
ANIMALS
ASTRONAUTS
TELEVISION PROGRAMMES
FOOTBALLERS
PLAYS
POLITICIANS
SPORTS

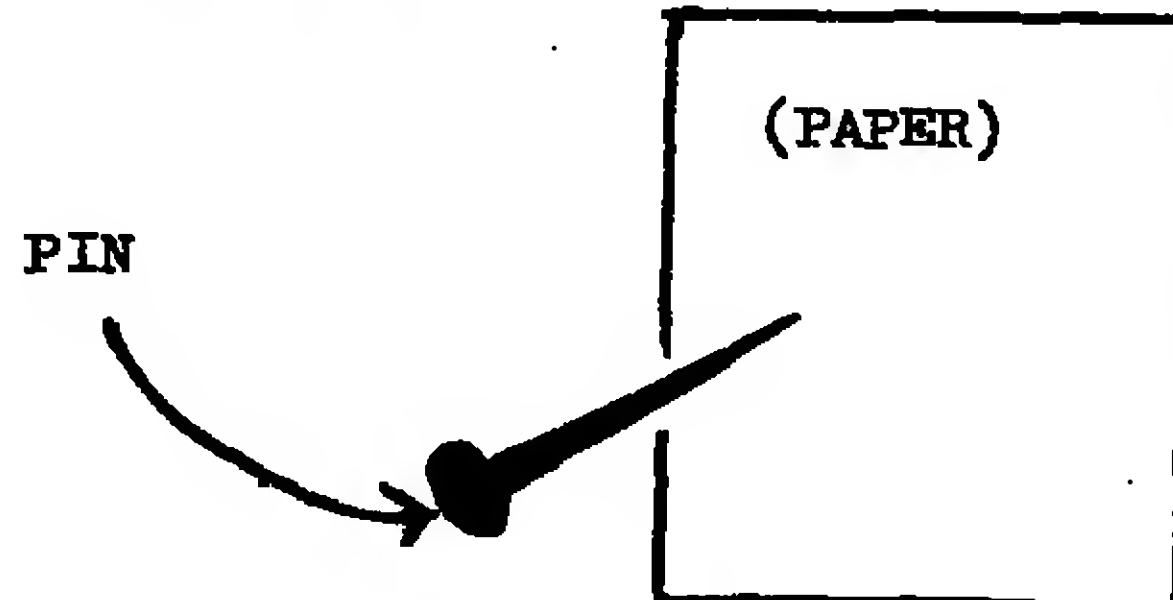
Now pick a letter — not any letter, because one will have a chance if you choose Z or X or Q! — and give the players five or 10 minutes in which to think of names to go by each category beginning with the right letter.

When the time is up, get all the players to read out their lists and award one mark for every name a player has listed that no other players has listed. The player with the top marks is the champion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

(A) Can you use a pin to prick a sheet of paper through the dead centre without the aid of any measuring instruments.



(B) If George's age 15 years hence, divided by his age 15 years ago, is equal to the fraction 29/14, how old is George today.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Nov. 17

7:10 The Road To Avonlea

8:30 My Secret Identity

9:10 Snowy River

The Stampede

Matt leaps in to protect his nephew from an acute financial crisis.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — One Against The Wind

A French countess fights courageously against the occupation of her country.

11:50 Never The Twain

Friday, Nov. 18

7:15 On Location

7:30 African Skies

9:10 Tequila & Bonetti

10:00 News In English

10:20 Blanche

11:00 Coming of Age

Saturday, Nov. 19

7:30 Harry And The Hendersons

8:00 Documentary — Innovation

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Murder She Wrote

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Shadow Of A Doubt
Starring: Mark Harmon and Margret Welsh

12:00 Major Dad

Sunday, Nov. 20

7:30 Mc Hales Navy

8:00 The Phantom Horsemen

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Sherlock Holmes

Incident At Victoria Falls

10:00 News In English

10:20 Scarlett

11:10 The Upper Hand

Monday, Nov. 21

7:30 Black Beauty

8:00 Boogies Diner

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Shades Of L.A.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Headhunters

Tuesday, Nov. 22

7:30 F.B.I.: The Untold Stories

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Cracking The Code

10:00 News In English

10:20 The House Of Eliott

11:10 Fly By Night

Wednesday, Nov. 23

7:30 Coach

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Snowy River

10:00 News In English

10:20 Poldark

11:10 Coming Of Age

George Lucas plans return to Star Wars, filming three at a time

By Bob Thomas
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Star Wars films will be turning to movie screens, but you may have to wait until the end of the year to see the new films.

When George Lucas returned to the movie world with Star Wars in 1977, he outlined an ambitious plan: To film a triple about intergalactic war and warfare. With Empire Strikes Back in 1980 and Return of the Jedi in 1983, he completed the first of the trilogy.

He also created three of the top 10 film grosses of all time. During the next 10 years, Lucas became entangled in other grand schemes, notably making Indiana Jones trilogy (Steven Spielberg) and directing the Lucas tech empire at Skywalker Ranch in northern California.

Now, he confirms that he will continue the Star Wars saga, taking the series back to the era before Luke Skywalker,

Princess Leia and Han Solo. As with most Lucas projects, he reveals little, but he did disclose his modus operandi on the three films:

"I'll take a year to write them, a year to prepare them, and a year to shoot them. And I'll shoot them all at once."

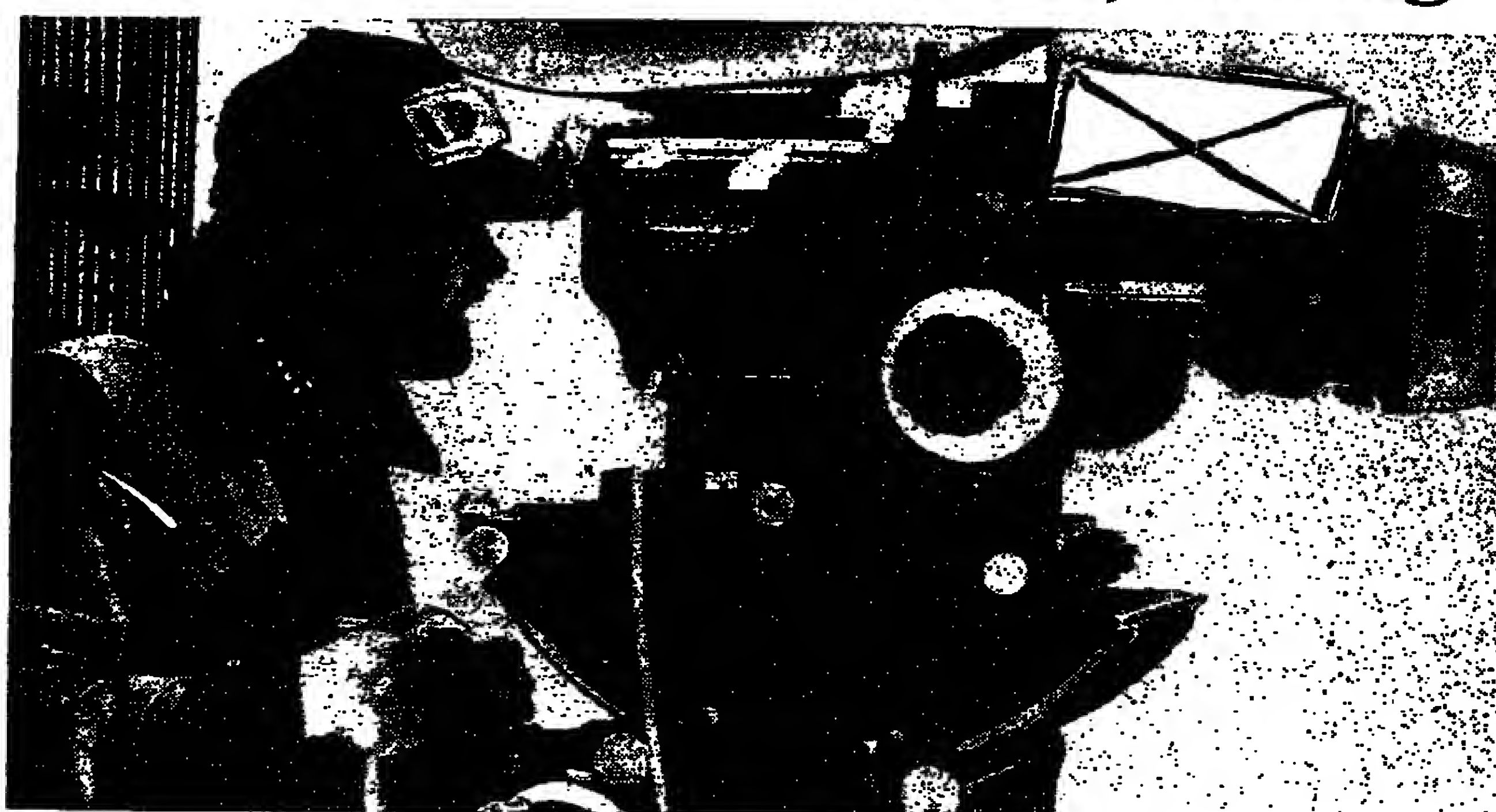
Filming three major movies at once would be unprecedented. Spielberg and director Robert Zemeckis continuously shot the second and third versions of Back to the Future.

In 1973, Alexander and Michael Salkind managed to produce simultaneously The Three Musketeers and The Four Musketeers. Charlton Heston and other actors demanded extra pay, claiming they believed they were making one film only.

Lucas hasn't directed a film since his early hits American Graffiti and Star Wars. He hinted that he might return to directing for the new Star Wars.

"I'll decide after I get the films prepared," he said.

Besides his blockbuster



George Lucas prepare to shoot a scene from one of his films

trilogies, Lucas has ventured into other films as executive producer, often with little success. Among them: Howard The Duck, Labyrinth, Willow, Tucker: The Man and His Dream and The Land Before Time.

His latest is Radioland

Murders, which opened to mixed reviews and disappointing business. Lucas, who wrote the original story, explained that it stemmed from his early fascination with radio.

"I grew up with radio," said Lucas, born in Modesto, Calif., 50 years ago.

"We didn't get a television set until I was 10 years old. So for the first 10 years, I was in front of the radio listening to radio dramas. It played an important part of my life."

"I listened to Inner Sanctum, The Whistler, The Lone Ranger — those

were the ones that interested me. I think they influenced me to put more emphasis on the soundtrack in my movies. I've always been very emotionally involved in music. I think it's just an extension of the theory that what you see is important,

but what you hear is just as important."

Lucas, whose bushy black hair is showing signs of gray, said the idea of Radioland Murders came to him when he was writing American Graffiti, in which radio played a big role.

"I was also interested in periods of transition," he said. "In American Graffiti, it was kids becoming adults, the changes in society, and a time when one technology (television) overtook another technology (radio)."

"Now, it's an appropriate time for this kind of movie. Just as in 1939, when television was threatening radio, now you have multimedia going to take over television."

"I'm sure some 10-year-old channel-surfer today is going to make a movie about it 40 years from now. It will be as esoteric to young people then as radio is to young people now."

Radioland Murders, which was slammed by critics, is a slapstick comedy combined with a murder mystery that takes place in a radio station during an

all-star broadcast launching a new network.

"This is very much in the mode of His Girl Friday or the Cary Grant screwball comedies," Lucas said. "Also, we've thrown in a lot of the three stooges. It's a kind of sophisticated comedy like The Thin Man together with the off-the-wall comedy of the Marx brothers. Plus some nostalgia about bigtime radio."

Lucas said he studied to become an anthropologist while a student at Modesto Junior College. "In American Graffiti, I wanted to show what the mating ritual of young people in the '50s was like, something that was left behind in the '60s," he said.

"Here, I wanted to make a film about what the magic of radio was in its period. Radio was bigger than television today; it was more of a national phenomenon. Now, we have sort of Balkanized the various entertainment media, so nothing has the same kind of weight, unless there is a national emergency."

French mogul Pathe shaped cinema's first 100 years

By John Follain
Reuters

PARIS — France is celebrating cinema's first hundred years with star billing a butcher's son turned mogul who hung the screen across the globe.

Four decades after his death, French cinema near Charles Pathe is celebrated on an exhibition on an art that initiated millions and churned out 19th-century gramophones and projectors, silent films and 35-mm film strips.

His first step as budding industrialist was to buy and resell Edison's phonograph record-player, and then to pirate his kineoscope, which only lacked projection to be fully-fledged cinema.

He founded Pathe in 1896 to exploit the invention of the moving image by the Lumiere Brothers and Edison, and quickly widened its scope to churn out within a few months dozens of films modelled on the first Lumiere forays.

His first offerings cover a wide range — from slapstick comedy to science and from romance to newsreels.

Titillating erotic essays,

his autobiography.

His beginnings, like those of his breadwinner, were particularly humble. A prized item at the Centre Pompidou exhibition is an 1894 register which names him among other pedlars at a Paris suburb fairground.

He is listed as a phonograph-player, a job he hit upon as more lucrative than the butcher's shop of his Alsatian parents after experimenting as a cashier, washing machine salesman and parrot tradesman in Buenos Aires.

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Titillating erotic essays,

tame by today's standards, include a naked peasant girl struggling to look graceful and reveal something as she clutches a towel to herself and washes her feet simultaneously.

"These first films were made very quickly," said exhibition organiser Jacques Gerber. "Charles would choose a lady, and then go and film her himself in a bath. It didn't take much."

Buoyed by early success, Pathe bought up or built cinemas, studios and laboratories. He industrialised production of film equipment, projectors and equipment.

His logo, a proud rooster, is stamped on company stationery from Montevideo to Moscow. Old photographs on display show regiments of workers making cameras and projectors as if on a vehicle assembly-line.

Pathe ruled his staff with an iron hand, and his desk bore a dry warning to visitors: "Your time is precious, so is mine."

"He was the world's first industrialist of film. Nobody did as much as he did to spread cinema across the world," said film historian Jacques Kermabon.

"He spread the appeal

of cinema beyond the fairground to the bourgeoisie. The middle classes were worried about the vulgar image of cinema, and he reassured them that it was safe by using actors from the theatre and filming classics," he said.

Pathe is partly to blame for today's film-it-yourself home video craze, patenting the Pathe-baby camera which turned bourgeois parents into directors overnight, not always to the delight of relatives and friends.

On show is the only model ever made of a solid silver mini-projector, the 1929 Pathe-kid which the magnate is thought to have commissioned for an illegitimate son.

Other odds and ends include the contract which sex symbol Brigitte Bardot signed at the age of 20, and the white ballgown of shimmering silk Claudia Cardinale wore in Luchino Visconti's 1963 "Il Gattopardo" (The Leopard).

That classic is among 300 movies on show in a retrospective of the Pathe firm's output which includes Marcel Carne's 1945 Les Enfants Du Paradis and Franco-Italian co-productions such as The Leopard and Federico Fellini's 1960 La Dolce Vita.

Indian film-maker launches Asia's largest TV programme firm

By Pratap Chakravarty
Agence France Presse

NEW DELHI — An Indian film-maker has launched what the owners claim will be Asia's largest integrated TV software venture which aims to produce 1,200 hours of programming each month and give foreign broadcasters a run for their money.

Subhash Ghai, whose film "Khalnayak" (Villain) turned into blockbuster after its star Sanjay Dutt was arrested in connection with last year's blasts in Bombay, said the venture would also raise a new generation of TV personalities.

Drishhti, or Vision, will also fuel competition in

India's sizzling entertainment industry and challenge the Hong Kong-based Star Television's successful Hindi-language channel called Zee TV. Ghai said.

"About films I know. About television I will learn or innovate," said that film-maker who has some one dozen box-office hits to his credit in Bombay, India's Hollywood.

Ghai's 400 million rupees (\$13 million) TV software firm plans to produce 300 hours of soap operas, talk shows, games and serials every month during its first year of operation and 1,200 hours by the third year.

The Drishhti software

will be produced in all of India's 25 languages. It will increase the number of telefilm productions from four in the first year to eight in three years time, Ghai told a news conference.

Drishhti, partnered by director Ghai, a TV film producer and a former Doordarshan chief, also plans to extend in-house training to budding artists and have a full-scale talent scouting wing.

"We are committing ourselves to give others a run for their money. We will not imitate the West but will compete with the West," Ghai said after launching Drishhti, which he says is Asia's largest integrated TV programme

firm. "The Indian market of 900 million people is immense," Ghai said and estimated that some 3,000 hours of monthly programmes would be soon required for the private broadcasters.

"Who will feed them?" he added.

"But our main aim would be to retain India's cultural heritage in our programmes," said Anuradha Prasad, Drishhti's co-partner, adding that funds for the company will come from promoters from within the industry.

At least 25 private television channels are jostling with each other to beam satellite programmes across the country.

Broadway vet Elaine Stritch shines in Showboat

NEW YORK (AP) — Elaine Stritch, barking several "hello, sweeties" to smiling staffers, strides into one of her regular haunts in the theatre district and settles at a prime corner table.

"You don't have any skim milk — that's why I have to be so tacky," the actress explains to a hovering waitress as she unpacks her own evian bottle refilled with milk and a plastic container of peaches and bran.

"This is breakfast," she says with conviction, despite the fact that other diners are pursuing lunch menus. "Just bring me a cup of decaf coffee."

Stritch has done things her own way, her own distinctive way, all her life. Not even the restrictive diet, a consequence of her 15-year battle with diabetes, has slowed her down.

"My mother used to tell me, 'play a whore on the stage and be a convent girl off.' As I got older, I realised how difficult that was because they get in each other's way, if you know what I mean," she says with a laugh.

Stritch is one of a handful of triumphant musical-theatre ladies such as Gwen Verdon and Barbara Cook who made names for themselves on Broadway after World War II. In Stritch's case, acclaim started with revivals of Pal Joey and On Your Toes continued with Noel Coward's Sail Away and reached legendary status when she sang The Ladies Who Lunch.

Stephen Sondheim's acerbic anthem to Manhattan matrons in Company.

These days, she's lending her formidable talents to Show Boat, the lavish revival of the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical that director Harold Prince first did last year in Toronto.

In it, she plays Parthy Ann Hawks ("I just love her full name," Stritch purrs), the cantankerous wife of Cap'n Andy, owner of the floating theatre palace called the Cotton Blossom. Parthy always has been something of a footnote in Show Boat, a character overshadowed by her husband, the two young lovers Magnolia and Gaylord, and Joe the Stevedore who sings "Ol' Man River."

Not so in the hands of Stritch. Prince has given her Why Do I Love You — one of the show's best-known numbers and usually sung by the romantic couple — to croon as a lullaby to the woman's newborn granddaughter.

Stritch snorts at the idea of Parthy as a small role. "Big actors playing small parts is a way of life in London," she says about a city where she lived and worked for 15 years. "You don't play a star part every time you do a show in the West End. English actors play the lead one day, then they play a wonderful character part, and nobody says they're slipping."

"It does tax your understanding, though," Stritch adds. "You can get used to making a grand entrance and coming down staircases with people pointing at you, and then

in your next show, you come in the back door — and nobody knows you're any good until you leave. But I've always said I'd rather get a hand exiting than entering."

Stritch has done a lot of both in a topsy-turvy career that has had its share of ups and downs. Her battle with alcoholism — she quit drinking seven years ago — and the death of her husband, actor John Bay, of a brain tumour in 1982, were two of the lowest points. They had been married for nine years.

"There were so many things I wanted to do in my life," she says. "At least being an actress allows me to experience them from a creative point of view. It's make-believe but that's what I deal in."

"Sometimes that's been a hardship because if you deal in make-believe all the time, it makes it a little difficult to face reality. You get them mixed up. And I went and spent six months in an atmosphere that I'm very at home at — a saloon."

That was the mid-1960s when she took a job making drinks at Elaine's, a popular East Side watering hole that's still around today.

"I was a hell of a bartender," Stritch recalls. "I was like a cook who loves food. I adored booze and I knew how to prepare it — and I knew how to consume it. I spent a lot of my youth in saloons — and then I grew up and I closed the bar. You put away childish things — a little late but I did it. I'm dealing with more impor-

tant things now than a dry martini straight up, and it's working out fine."

What brought her back to the theatre was the persistence of Jeff Barr, a personal manager who "spoke so knowingly of me that I went right out of the bar that night and gave my notice to Elaine."

Stritch started over again, doing a lot of summer stock and five years later Company put her back on the map.

"Very few people get that second chance," Stritch says. "Every once in a while I think about how lucky I was. There are not truer words spoken than, 'you never know how well off you are until you've lost it.' You've got to appreciate what you've got when you've got it."

That's why she relishes being on stage in Show Boat every night and working again for Prince, who directed her in Company.

Parthy was a challenge to me and that challenge was to make her fuller than a crotchety, bossy lady with a tight corset on. Nobody's all one colour. God knows, I've found that out.

"And Hal is a big-picture director. He thinks of the overall thing, how is the whole picture going to work. What he wanted Show Boat to be, right from the very beginning, was a story about a family. And what does that do? That makes me, as the mother, the most important person in the play."

"Gee, Dan Quayle would love this," she cackles.

South Africa needs art, too

ANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) —

South Africa's black majority needs art, schools, roads, but, a group of aspirant artists insists.

It is a part of life and a necessary part of said Tumelo Mosaka, a photographer from who studied in this year as part programme to train African curators.

Mosaka, 26, was among 10 Africans sent to United States, Europe and Australia in the pre-1994 Johannesburg arts festival scheduled for next year.

A festival, a first for

Mosaka and the curator he studied with in California, Lizette Lefelle Collins, are working to stage an exhibit for the biennale of the sculpture of two prominent Americans, Betye Saar and John Outterbridge, and South Africans Ben Ntshaba and Moria Mabaso.

Biennale coordinator Bongzi Dhlomo-Mautloa said that once the exhibits are dismantled and the research papers read, she hopes the young curators will start museums in their own communities.

Local museums demonstrate "that the community has pride in its culture. We have got pride in our hearts, but we can't show anything to our children," she said.

South Africa's black-led government has pledged to spend billions of dollars to improve conditions for blacks who were neglected by the old white minority government. The focus has been on physical needs.

But Dhlomo-Mautloa, a printmaker and curator, says developing art and artists is just as important.

"A builder says houses are most important. Doctors are saying health is most important. As an artist, because I know what fulfillment I get from making art and what fulfillment a person gets from interacting with an art object, my point would be just as strong as that of a person who makes houses."

"People who are practicing know. We're going to have to just put our foot down and say: You need this."

"The largest part of Johannesburg's population lives in Soweto, and yet there are no museums in Soweto," she said.

Mosaka said he was intrigued to find museums in San Francisco, Oakland and Los Angeles devoted to different ethnic groups. He said similar museums in South Africa could help communities once separated by apartheid learn

about each other.

"Being a curator, you become a vocal chord for the artist," Mosaka said. "I felt there was a lack of black representation in the visual arts. There wasn't anyone speaking for, trying to represent black artists to the mainstream. We'd always been represented by white academics."

As a child growing up in a township near Johannesburg, Sgila Mazibuko remembers museums as being "out of reach" — sterile, hostile places for a black child who saw nothing of his own life on the walls.

Mazibuko returned from his trip to Czechoslovakia as part of the curator training programme with a vibrant idea of what a museum can be.

"To show history — I think that's what a museum is all about. You would look and say, 'oh, that's how people lived in the past, here's how we live now, and there's our future,'" he said.

Experts urge green light for genetic vaccines

GENEVA (R) — A group of experts in genetic engineering called on the World Health Organisation (WHO) to approve the widespread introduction of safer, more effective genetic vaccines.

A three-day meeting of vaccine researchers, biologists, regulators and public health officials concluded that, two decades into the genetic revolution, there was no reason to fear genetically-engineered products.

Through its "expanded programme of immunisation," which began in 1974, the U.N. health agency has already ensured that 80 per cent of the world's children are immunised against the six most common childhood diseases.

But for various reasons, including cost, the remaining fifth are still not vaccinated and eight million people die every year from other diseases for which no effective long-lasting vaccines are widely available.

"Genetic engineering is not some frightening

evil," said Professor Francois Jacob, a Nobel Medicine Prize winner from the Pasteur Institute in Paris. "Scientists are the first to say that care must be taken."

The meeting was called by WHO Director-General Hiroshi Nakajima for advice on what he should tell the WHO's 198 member states regarding new vaccines derived from biotechnology — the manipulation of genes — rather than blood or tissue cultures.

The chairman of the

meeting, Australian Sir Gustav Nossal, told a news conference that the experts had reached an "overwhelming consensus" that the new products were safe.

"Our advice to the director-general will be that there is no need for special regulations or special legislation to cover products that are coming from these newer technologies because in principle they have no disadvantages over the vaccines that are conventionally grown in tissue cultures or in artificial media," Sir Gustav said.

He said it had become quite clear that these products "are safer, they are more reproducible batch-to-batch, and in some instances could even be described as cheaper than the conventional vaccines made from other means."

In their ultimate form, genetically-engineered vaccines could involve just one injection of a minute amount of the genetic building block DNA that could afford long-term, effective protection

against a clutch of diseases.

That kind of one-stop miracle vaccine is some way off, however, and in the meantime scientists are eager to have other genetic vaccines put into widespread use.

Sir Gustav said some engineered vaccines were already established. The worldwide introduction of one for Hepatitis-B, for example, was only being delayed by cost.

Other genetic vaccines that could soon be in mass production include at least

one for cholera — for which the current conventional vaccine is unreliable — and for diarrhoeal diseases that are a great killer in the Third World.

Another conventional vaccine that could find itself supplanted is that for pertussis or whooping cough. The current vaccine produces dangerous side effects in about one in 2,000 children," Sir Gustav said.

The only disease for which no genetic is in sight is AIDS, largely because scientists are still not sure

exactly how the disease functions, experts said.

With such vaccines taking 10 years of research and costing an average of \$200 million to bring to the market, the main obstacle to their introduction is cost.

The Geneva meeting did not linger on the ethical issues raised by biotechnology, said Sir Gustav. Although some facets of genetic engineering raised ethical questions, the creation of life-saving vaccines generally did not.

Eye drops may diagnose Alzheimer's disease — researchers

WASHINGTON (AP) — A simple test using eye drops may identify patients with Alzheimer's disease, a brain-debilitating disorder now diagnosed with certainty only after death.

Although medical science now has little to offer Alzheimer's patients, Huntington Potter of the Harvard Medical School said the test could be important when new drugs for the disease are developed. He said the test would make an early diagnosis possible, enabling

patients to plan, while they are still able, for the inevitable loss of mental ability.

Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and at Harvard report that an eye drop drug called Tropicamide causes the pupils in the eyes of Alzheimer's patients to dilate about four times more readily than those of patients without the brain disease.

Dr. Potter said that Alzheimer's disease patients are so sensitive to Tropicamide that their

pupils will change by about 23.4 per cent, while patients without Alzheimer's have only a 5 per cent change.

Tropicamide is the drug that ophthalmologists routinely use to dilate pupils during eye exams. Its effects last only briefly. When used for the Alzheimer's test, the drug is diluted to about one per cent of the concentration used in eye tests.

Alzheimer's disease progressively destroys the brain, wiping out memory, thought and the con-

trol of body functions. The disease strikes about 10 per cent of the population over the age of 65 and currently affects about 20 million people worldwide.

Dr. Potter, senior author of a study published in the journal Science, originated the idea of using Tropicamide to test for Alzheimer's after noting that patients with Down syndrome were highly sensitive to the drug.

Down syndrome is an inherited disorder that causes mental retardation. Down patients after the

age of 30 often develop the same brain lesions and dementia symptoms that are characteristic of Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Potter reasoned that if Down patients were hypersensitive to Tropicamide, then Alzheimer's patients may be also.

The research at Brigham and Women's Hospital involved 58 patients, 19 already diagnosed as probable Alzheimer's victims, 32 with no symptoms of the disease, four with other types of dementia and

three with other disorders. Using the eye test, the researchers were able to correctly identify 18 of the 19 probable Alzheimer's patients.

Dr. Potter said the eye test identified one patient as positive for Alzheimer's, but he exhibited none of the symptoms when tested by other methods. It was counted as a false positive.

But 10 months later the patient was retested. Dr. Potter said that the eye test was again positive and, this time, other tests

showed there was a loss of memory and concentration characteristic of Alzheimer's.

Thus, said Dr. Potter, the eye test may be able to detect the disease long before symptoms appear.

Dr. Potter said the eye drop technique must be tested on hundreds of patients around the world before its accuracy can be confirmed. He said it will be at least two years before the test could become available.

Only one drug, Tacrine, has been approved to treat

Alzheimer's, and even it is of only limited value to some patients.

However, better drugs are now being tested, Dr. Potter said, and it will be vital to quickly identify patients who can benefit from the drugs.

"Of the potential drugs now undergoing clinical trials, none will be able to reverse Alzheimer's, but they will halt the progression," he said. "So it is very important to identify patients prior to any cognitive decline."

AIDS summit accord to back condoms, clean syringes

By Irwin Arieff
Reuter

PARIS — An AIDS summit set next month in Paris is expected to produce a 42-nation accord urging condom use and sterile syringe distribution as part of a new global drive against the deadly infection, organisers said Tuesday.

"We are in the process of changing attitudes," said Doctor Bernard Debre, summit coordinator, describing the agreement to be signed by senior

officials of 42 nations on Dec. 1 as "an extremely strong document."

Preparations for the summit, hosted by France and the World Health Organisation (WHO), have been underway for the past year, Dr. Debre and WHO summit coordinator Dr. Olivier Brasseur told reporters.

A draft of the final summit accord, completed in late October, has been agreed in advance by representatives of all participating nations, they said. Many nations in the

past opposed distribution of sterile syringes on demand to combat AIDS, arguing that this encouraged drug abuse.

Debate over condoms nearly derailed a United Nations Population Conference in Cairo in September, when the Vatican and some Muslim nations joined forces to battle a conference report dealing with the touchy subjects of family planning and abortion.

But even the predominantly Catholic and Muslim nations attending the

Paris AIDS summit have agreed to accept the endorsement of condom use to battle AIDS, WHO and French officials said.

The Vatican concluded in Cairo that while it opposed condom use for family planning, it did not object to their use for disease prevention, one WHO official said.

Coming into the drafting meetings, which took place in Geneva and Paris in September and October, participants were full of dread about controversy, Dr. Debre said.

"Don't talk about sex. Never condoms? Oh, please no," he said they howled.

But by the end of the drafting process, "it was very dramatic in the way that the representatives accepted the need for condoms and education," said another official.

The Paris AIDS Summit will be the first to focus on political leaders rather than researchers,

health care workers and patients, the organisers said.

They became convinced over a year ago that an international political mobilisation was needed at the highest levels to complement research, care and prevention efforts.

"AIDS will either be conquered everywhere or nowhere at all," organisers said in a statement.

The draft agreement to be signed on Dec. 1 formally recognises the magnitude of the AIDS epidemic and set out a series of "concrete international initiatives" to battle it including the distribution of sterile syringes and condom use, officials said.

The draft also calls for eliminating AIDS transmission via tainted blood transfusions and blood

products, greater global cooperation on development of an AIDS vaccine and special efforts to protect and care for infected women and children, they said.

More than 16 million people worldwide are now infected with the AIDS virus and some 6,000 new infections occur every day, world health officials say.

Scientists find gene governing HIV reproduction

PHILADELPHIA (R) — In a discovery that opens a new line of research for drugs to fight AIDS, scientists reported finding a gene governing reproduction of the HIV virus that causes that deadly disease.

Writing in the current Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, University of Pennsylvania scientists said the gene makes a protein that triggers reproduction of HIV, which can lie dormant in the body for years.

Antibodies to the protein were able to neutralise it in the laboratory, suggesting medicines could be developed that will do the same.

"It gives us a new target for drug development... now it's our responsibility to make them," said David Weiner, an assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

Two students working in Dr. Weiner's lab, David Levy and Yosef Refaeli — were the principal authors of the study and Dr. Weiner was listed as a co-author.

The gene is a portion of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and is known as "VPR" for the protein — called a "viral-associated protein" — it produces.

The protein is shed by the virus and enters the blood of persons infected with HIV. The gene was first identified in 1987, but its role was previously unknown.

A particular promise of medicines based on inhibiting the activity of VPR is that the protein is not prone to mutations, which have hampered the effectiveness of other anti-AIDS medications such as AZT, Dr. Weiner said.

"It doesn't change very much, so unlike some of the other targets which change rapidly, VPR... should not be able to escape drug intervention so easily," he said.

He said his laboratory was investigating possible substances that would inhibit VPR, but such work was likely to be widely explored by other researchers as well.

Dr. Weiner said his group initially found that when a laboratory-made VPR protein was added to dormant HIV-infected cells, the cells became high producers of the

virus. "It (VPR) reversed latency," he said in a telephone interview.

The researchers then confirmed the protein was present in the blood of HIV infected patients, existed in higher amounts among patients with severe HIV infections, and stimulated reproduction of the virus.

Furthermore, antibodies to the protein were able to inhibit its function.

Dr. Weiner said one theory about the progress of HIV infections is that the VPR protein may exist

in high enough concentrations in viral "hot spots" in the body's lymph nodes to overwhelm antibody defence and keep the virus reproducing.

Eventually, as levels of the virus in the lymph nodes grow, the VPR could spread through the blood in concentrations high enough to fuel the rapid proliferation of HIV.

The published study said the protein also may play a role in HIV's effects on the immune system and neurological system.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

IT'S YOUR MOVE
By Robert Musson

ACROSS
1 Daughter of David
2 Fabled
3 First English
4 Matri
5 Peak away
6 Historic
7 Frenchman
8 Mission
9 Crest
10 City near Mauna
11 Vol
12 Vietnam come
13 Slender pole, 1965
14 Get
15 Repose
16 Coast land by
17 Airline
18 British living
19 Move slowly
20 Soil

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1 Dever's cap
2 Outmost part
3 Bush and West
4 Carter and living
5 Hegarty's
6 Platoon
7 Coal residue
8 Archaic org.
9 All well
10 Carrelan
11 Percolate, in a way
12 Rodeo of the
13 Larders
14 Bird's beak
15 Bernadette
16 Hermit's
17 "Run"
18 Margarine
19 Sport

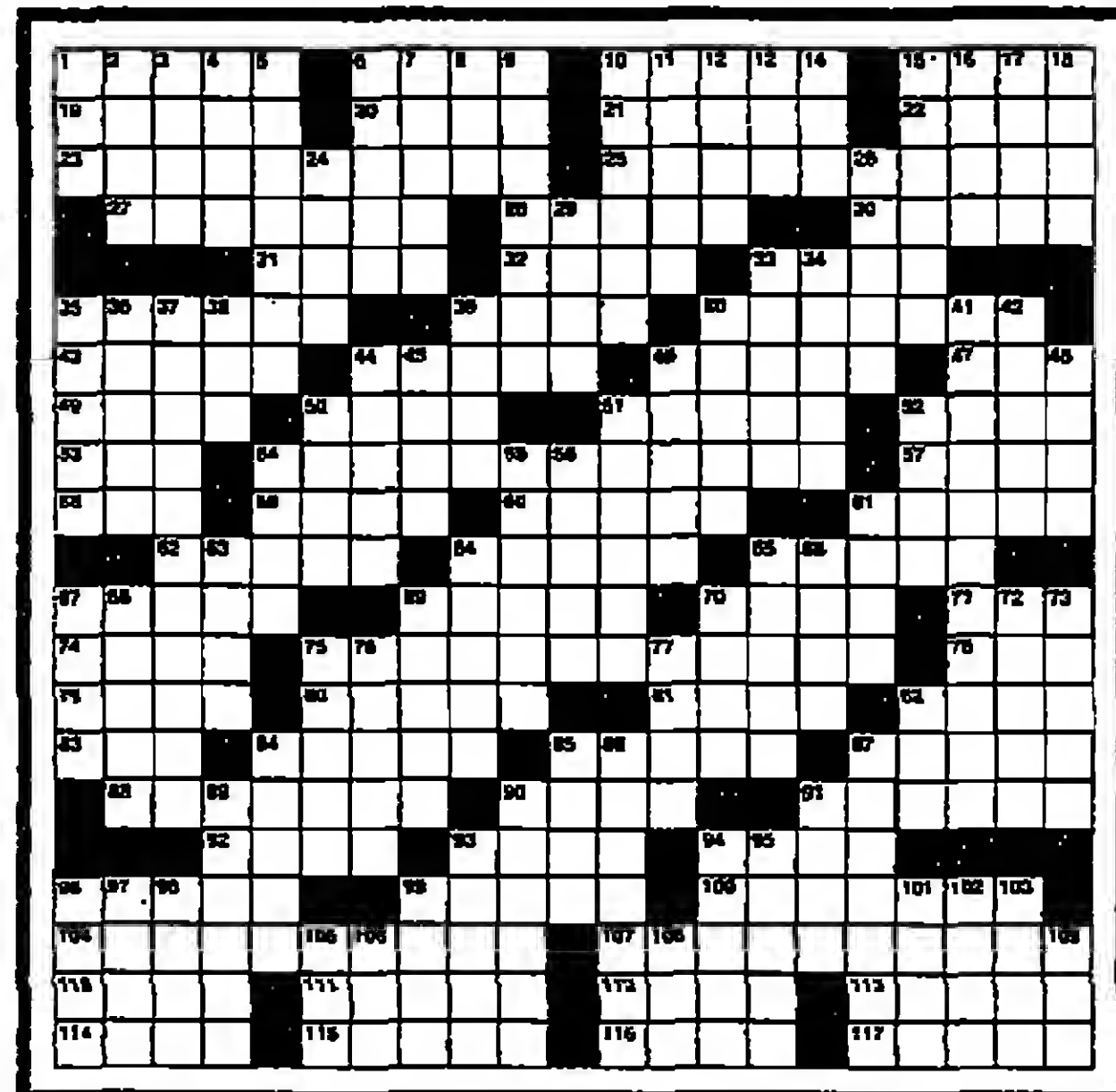
Diagramless 31 x 31
By Roger Coburn

ACROSS
1 For
2 Octad
3 Run off to
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5 Save for later
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SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

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Last Week's Cryptograms

1. When dead leaves leave my trees, at arrival of autumn, I would rather leave leaves where they fall.
2. In agony, shudderingly shed throughbred torso loose and ran roughed around stable grounds.
3. Zeppelin pilot fights monstrous headwind. Blown across time zone, he lands backwards a half hour before taking off.
4. Patients beware! Clonish, comic surgeons might be real cut-ups.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. GWS ZWITLS "PEEP GYPS" AL PRODARK
DYOW DEIS T2G HAGW STOW PAK RSH
LSTLER.

2. BLORTRY MK YSTUCUDD MCLRJCOB
ACBLOCY RJTUPOCR DJSUF AC DCCR LBY
JCOCFC.

3. ETS RDQATE AYMISTJ IUCIW UE YE
JTYTL BW UMSTJ MTHC LYQQW KBWV
BYMS JDEKJW.

4. NGCC GLUX FLUAYI AY CIPPGF BEEBER
SWANZ WEB LTS ZOWEBZ ENKPII LO
ULFLAALY PELE.

Thoughts For This Week

The philosophies of one age have become the absurdities of the next, and the foolishness of yesterday has become the wisdom of tomorrow — Sir William Osler, Canadian physician and educator (1849-1901).

To think is to speak low. To speak is to think aloud — F. Max Mueller, German philologist (1823-1900).

The strongest are those who renounce their own times and become a living part of those yet to come. The strongest, and the rarest — Milovan Djilas, Yugoslav author and politician.

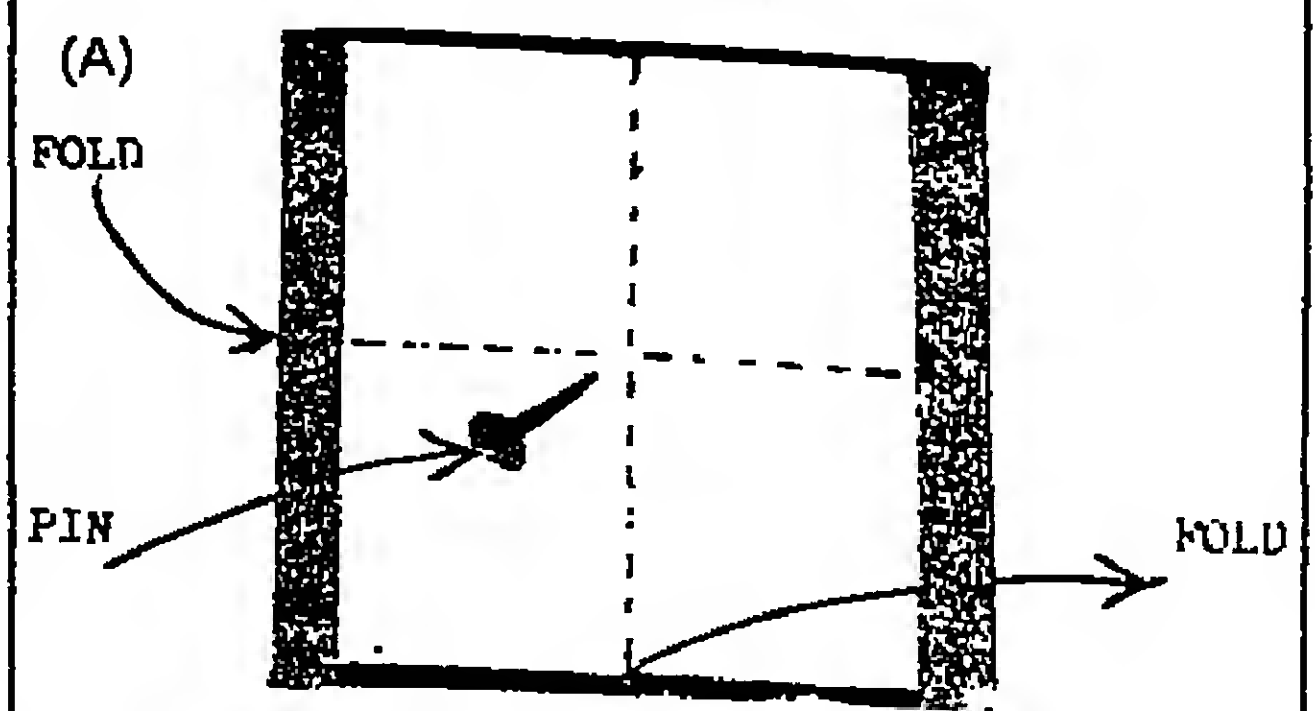
There are different kinds of wrong. The people sinned against are not always the best — Dame Ivy Compton-Burnett, English author (1892-1969).

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. No, the surname should be added to the title.
2. The prospective bridegroom.
3. Bread, crackers, olives, candy, raw fruits, small pickles, and corn on the cob.
4. No, he should walk on the outside, or street side.
5. No.
6. No.
7. Yes.
8. She may do so.
9. No, it is a compliment to the hostess or cook to eat everything on the plate.
10. It is not.

PUZZLES



- (B) 43 years old. Add the product of 15 and 29 to that of 15 and 14; divide result by the difference between 29 and 14.

Kuwait ready to deal with Israel, not for talks with Iraq

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies)

Kuwait has said it was prepared to deal with Israel but ruled out dialogue with Iraq, its Arab neighbour which invaded the emirate in 1990.

Lifting the direct Arab trade boycott of Israel was "just a matter of time," Information Minister Saud Nasser Al Sabah said in a newspaper report published here Wednesday.

"The existence of Israel has become a fact," and "as long as our security and stability are linked to the United States and its interests, it is only natural to be linked with Israel, America's ally," he added.

"Arab countries must take a collective decision to deal with Israel before being forced to do so," he added. The six Gulf Arab monarchies have lifted an indirect boycott of Israel but a ban on direct trade remains in place. "This decision is the Arab League's concern," said Sheikh Saud.

"I want to make it clear that lifting the boycott of Israel has become a matter of time after the bilateral recognitions between Israel and the Arab parties in the struggle," Sheikh Saud said, according to the pro-

government Al Anba daily. Arab states had forbidden dealings with Israel since its creation in 1948. The Arab League established the Damascus-based boycott office in May 1951, to monitor the ban.

All economic contacts with the Jewish state were banned and companies which had dealings with it were blacklisted in the Arab World. Kuwait and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman — have dropped the secondary boycott rules related to blacklisting foreign firms.

But the six oil-rich nations have said they would continue to prohibit direct dealings with Israel until it has resolved its disputes with its immediate Arab neighbours. Sheikh Saud's remarks, however, indicated that Kuwait did not plan to wait indefinitely before taking other steps which would help end Israel's political and commercial isolation in the Middle East.

The United States and some of its Western allies have been pushing the Arabs to abandon the embargo as a goodwill gesture that would help push forward the peace

process. "The existence of Israel is a fact," Sheikh Saud told Al Anba. "Our security and stability are connected to the United States and Britain and our interests lie in tightening our ties with them."

Turning to Iraq, he said: "We refuse all contact, of whatever kind, with the present regime in place in Iraq and we have no intention of having any contact."

He welcomed Monday's renewal of the U.N. sanctions in force against Iraq since the invasion of August 1990. "We have explained our clear stand to all allied and friendly countries stating that the Iraqi recognition of Resolution 633 is only a simple part of the international demands which have to be fulfilled," said the minister.

He described Iraq's recognition of Kuwait last week, in line with the U.N. Security Council resolution, as nothing more than "theatrics" and noted that the two countries had had diplomatic relations and embassies for 30 years.

"We are dealing with a regime that does not recognize international law and has no commitment to treaties," said Sheikh Saud.

Amnesty voices concern on increased hangings in Syria

NICOSIA (AP) — Amnesty International said Wednesday it was greatly concerned about an apparent increase in executions in Syria last year and a lack of fair trial in death-penalty cases.

The group, in a news release also reiterated its longstanding concern about the cases of thousands of political prisoners in Syrian prisons, some of them jailed for more than 20 years.

The statement came after the first visit to Syria by a delegation from the Nobel Prize-winning group to talk about human rights with high-level officials. Amnesty staff have visited the country in the past, but usually met with lower-level officials.

At least 14 people were reported to have been executed in 1993, said Amnesty's Kamal Samari. Of these, nine were convicted of rape or murder and five were executed for setting fire to a prison in March 1993, killing 57 inmates.

There were two executions in 1992. So far in 1994, two executions have been reported, Amnesty said. Some executions go unreported or are not known until some time later.

In the prison-arson case, "we think the speed with which the five were tried and executed may have undermined the international safe-

guards required in these cases," Mr. Samari told the Associated Press.

State-run news media said at the time that the five were hanged after being convicted on charges of torching the prison in a vain effort to cover up a drug-distribution ring they ran inside the facility, which houses common criminals.

Executions in Syria are usually carried out by hanging.

Syria also has introduced a new law extending the death penalty to first-time drug offenders. Amnesty pointed out in its news release, which coincided with the 24th anniversary Wednesday of President Hafez Al Assad's rise to power.

"Amnesty International is greatly concerned about the new law, the apparent increase in the number of executions in 1993, and the lack of fair trial in capital cases," the organisation said.

During its trip to Syria last month, the Amnesty delegation held the "first ever substantive talks with Syrian authorities covering all its human rights concerns" and called for "ending violations in the country."

The visitors met with the ministers of interior, justice and health as well as the president of the state security court and other senior

judges. Syrian officials "gave an undertaking to look into the dossier submitted by Amnesty International and respond to the issues and cases raised by the organization," Amnesty said in its statement.

Amnesty described as "positive" Syria's release of thousands of political prisoners since 1991, but said there had been little progress made in reviewing the cases of others, some of whom have been jailed for more than two decades.

Amnesty said that during its visit, the delegation raised the cases of more than a thousand people, including: — Prisoners detained without trial;

— Unfair trials;

— Prisoners held even after expiry of their sentence;

— Torture allegations;

— The cases of people who simply "disappeared."

The number of political prisoners in Syria runs in the thousands, Amnesty says, conceding that an exact figure is impossible to obtain under current circumstances. Some of the longest-standing political prisoners in Syria are top politicians who were jailed after Mr. Assad's bloodless coup in 1970. He has gradually been ordering their release, often for health reasons.

U.N. says Iraqi move significant

(Continued from page 1)

said. "Saddam's tower" in Baghdad is billed as the tallest in the Middle East. The chimneys of the Baghdad clock can now be heard up to five kilometres away.

There is also a two-level bridge, the first of its kind in Iraq, and the government has unveiled plans for what it says will be the largest mosque in the history of Islam.

President Saddam said he was determined to continue his construction drive, with or without foreign currency.

Anything that rose above the ground in Iraq terrified the United States because it showed Iraq was steadfast despite the sanctions, he said. "The (Americans and Zionists) would like to see Iraq... disappointed, frustrated, mourning and crying over debris and ruins," he said.

"This is a standard of conduct for those who are bankrupt of civilisation and culture. Is this the standard of a superpower? Is this how it should behave?"

Malaysia on Wednesday demanded that the Security Council lift economic sanctions against Baghdad and stop "torturing" the Iraqis.

To torture the Iraqis until they bring down (President) Saddam is to me most unfair," Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad told reporters.

Mr. Mahathir, speaking on his return home from an informal summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Coopera-

tion forum leaders in Indonesia, said the Iraqis had suffered enough from the sanctions.

Mr. Mahathir added that if Security Council members wanted President Saddam removed "let them do it."

"It is no point blaming Saddam for the sufferings of the Iraqis when Baghdad has shown its willingness to recognise Kuwait," Mr. Mahathir said.

Russia criticised Washington on Tuesday for its reluctance to ease the sanctions against Iraq, saying the U.S. stance reflected domestic political factors.

"Some countries take a position which is summed up by the words 'everything or nothing'," said senior Foreign Ministry official Vladimir Gudev in a reference to the United States.

"We think such tactics are dictated by internal political considerations of certain countries and has nothing in common with maintaining security in the Persian Gulf," he told a news briefing. "It could lead the situation into a dead end."

Mr. Gudev, first deputy head of the ministry's Middle East Department, said Moscow hoped to convince the United States to change its position.

Moscow worries that sweeping Republican Party electoral gains earlier this month, which gave it control over both houses of Congress, might persuade Presi-

dent Bill Clinton to alter his foreign policy.

Russia said last week that Washington's refusal to enforce the international arms embargo against Bosnia Muslims was triggered by the Democratic president's desire to appease the Republican legislature.

Russia advocates gradually lifting the sanctions imposed against Iraq.

Moscow believes that Iraq has done much to meet the conditions set by the United Nations for lifting sanctions.

The Security Council debate Monday had "shown positive elements but could have been much better," Mr. Gudev said.

The official said it was "difficult to imagine" a situation in which Moscow and Washington had a common point of view on the Gulf "where our two countries have their own interests," though he stressed that this did not mean the situation was deadlocked.

The recognition of Kuwait is "the first stone in achieving a settlement of the regional issue in its entirety," Mr. Gudev said. "In this perspective, we believe the Security Council must respond positively, or we risk a loss of the impetus" provided by Baghdad's initiative.

"Of course the recognition of Kuwait does not rule out putting pressure on Iraq, notably in the field of disarmament" as required by U.N. resolutions, he added.

American couples find babies in eastern Europe

By Kendali J. Wills
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Instinct took over.

Robert Kiggins stood in a small, spare room at Moscow's hospital No. 13, holding for the first time a blond-haired, blue-eyed 5-month-old boy. And he knew that a long search across two continents had finally delivered to him a son.

That summer day, Mr. Kiggins and his wife, Austa Devlin, met Alexander James Kiggins. Robert and Austa are Americans, Alexander is Russian.

"We had been holding him and walking around with him and he was getting a little drowsy," Mr. Kiggins says. "So I did what came naturally — I sang a lullaby, the same lullaby sung to me when I was young, and he went to sleep."

Their private journey matched the childless couple with a Russian boy whose mother wanted to give him away. Today, increasing numbers of American couples are following the same path to the former communist country.

Fueling the demand is the shortage in the United States of healthy, white babies. A newly opened Russia provides a ready source of orphaned and abandoned infants.

The boom has been picking up speed since Oct. 1991, when Russia began relaxing its regulations governing foreign adoptions. More than 1,700 Americans adopted children in Russia in the first 2½ years, and the pace of Russian adoptions is increasing this year.

Despite Moscow's stipulations that only nonethnically Russian with minor to severe developmental problems may be adopted by foreigners, many healthy babies are being brought out of Russia, either because Russian doctors knowingly falsify documents or because medical problems that are easily correctable in the West are judged serious by Russian standards, says Barbara Zen, a spokeswoman for the New York Adoptive Parents Committee.

Decisions to adopt from Russia follow a logical

progression, says Felicia Van Praagh, director of International Adoption at Spence-Chapin, the New York agency used by Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin.

"The first urge of many couples is to have their own biological child," she says. "When they consider adoption, they think of adopting domestically, and they find out how hard it is. Then they look internationally, where many move very happily into programmes of interracial adoption."

"But for many others, it is important to them that the children at least look like them physically. If that is a priority, they look to Eastern Europe."

Because of Moscow's restrictions, some couples prefer to look to other countries. But for those couples, Spence-Chapin has sent to Russia, all have come back with babies, Ms. Van Praagh says.

Another large adoption agency, Holt International Children's Service, has had similar success. Couples sometimes drop out of the Russia programme, says Suzanne Lloyd, programme assistant for Russian Adoptions, either because women become pregnant while waiting for a match or because they opt for other Holt programmes where infants are more readily available.

Ms. Devlin and Mr. Kiggins are typical of many couples. In their mid-40s and married for nine years, they had trouble conceiving.

"We always knew we were open to adoption," Ms. Devlin says. So they tried first to arrange a private adoption in the United States by placing newspaper ads. Despite setbacks, they came close several times during the year and a half they sought a baby in America.

"You get all kinds of scams, including people who wanted \$5,000 up front. But even if people who call are sincere, the women who are pregnant sometimes decide, for whatever reason, not to give up the baby," Ms. Devlin says. "It's understandable for them. But it was heartbreaking for us."

Finally, in late November 1993, they attended an in-

Robert Kiggins grew up during the cold war, fully expecting one day to have to fight the Russians. Now he holds a Russian baby in his arms, sings a lullaby to him and calls him son. Mr. Kiggins and his wife are among a growing number of Americans adopting babies behind what was once called the iron curtain.

troductory meeting for International Adoptions at Spence-Chapin's New York offices. Between that point and the time about nine months later that they brought Alexander to their queens apartment. They had to negotiate regulatory hurdles designed to weed out couples who wouldn't make good parents.

Medical checkups, approval by the Child Abuse Clearinghouse, fingerprinting for FBI background checks, immigration and naturalisation applications, a home study conducted by a social worker, filling out questionnaires about the type of child sought, and completing financial and family background profiles.

The cost, too, is significant. Mr. Van Praagh of Spence-Chapin says the total costs, including trips to pick up the child, average \$16,000 to \$18,000.

"It's an expensive process and therefore it rules out some families, and that's sad," Mr. Van Praagh says.

For Ms. Devlin and Mr. Kiggins, the cost was something they accepted in exchange for the comfort of having an established agency handling details overseas.

Their choice of Russia was made with the methodical deliberation that both Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin bring to their work as lawyers. Neither has Russian heritage. Mr. Kiggins is a mix of Irish, French and German ancestry, and Ms. Devlin's heritage is English and Irish. They simply wanted a baby who looked like them.

Russia, Ms. Devlin says, "just seemed more familiar" than other adoption programmes in Asia and Latin America.

"You have to make a

decision whether you want to go to a country where your kid will look more like you or foreign," she adds. When a match was finally made, the couple learned very little about the boy they would adopt. They were told he was only several months old and had a minor heart murmur that was expected to correct itself as he developed.

They learned his parents were Ukrainians in their 20s. The mother was unmarried and had several other children. Little was known about the father. Both parents were said to be in good health and had no alcohol or drug addictions.

"We don't exactly know why they were giving up their child," Mr. Kiggins says. He says the mother came to Moscow to have the baby and wrote a letter while at the hospital, saying she wanted to give up the baby for adoption.

With that incomplete information and a photo of a boy known as Ivan at hospital No. 13, Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin gathered baby bottles, milk formula, diapers and their hopes and set off for the first of two required trips to Moscow.

Although not all agencies require a second trip, Spence-Chapin said it can take several weeks between the time prospective parents file applications with Moscow authorities and the time they are allowed to take the child home. It is often more convenient and cheaper to return later.

The adoption, which must be approved by Russian courts before U.S. immigration officials will issue a visa, becomes final before the couple leaves Russia. Upon returning to the United States, parents need only file court papers to secure the child's

citizenship rights. Once Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin had held Alexander on their first visit, the subsequent separation was particularly difficult for the new parents.

"It was really upsetting leaving him," Ms. Devlin said during an interview in New York between the two trips. But she says they knew it wouldn't be long before they'd go back and bring him home.

Throughout the apartment were scattered signs of a newborn child — a carton of diapers in the corner, baby photos on the table, a waiting crib in the bedroom, and baby bottle nipples being sterilised on the stove — but no sounds of crying.

"Since we met him" on the first visit, Mr. Kiggins acknowledges, "I had a sense of loss about missing the last month" while the couple waited to return. On the return trip, the Russian hospital staff gave the couple a party, with chocolate cake and champagne, toasting them in Russian. The nurses offered practical information about the baby's schedule and sent them off with a supply of special Russian yogurt.

Weeks later, after Alexander had settled into his appointed crib and exercised his lungs in the five-room apartment, Mr. Kiggins and Ms. Devlin showed the telltale signs of harried parents of a demanding infant.

Well-practiced at the art of burping and even changing diapers in airplane restrooms, Ms. Devlin, who is on leave from her job, says her days now are busier than they ever were at work. Even so, the pair occasionally take time to reflect.

Later on, they say, they hope to see Alexander learn Russian, and perhaps learn more about his biological parents.

"It's ironic," Mr. Kiggins says. "Having grown up during the cold war, going through the Cuban missile crisis — the Russians were the big enemy. And now of course we owe that country personally, the country that was supposed to terminate my life gave me a new one — a child."

8 executives attend PLO meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian National Authority on every piece of territory that the Israeli enemy withdrew from.

He quickly corrected himself, saying "which the Israelis withdrew from."

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Wednesday he had ordered a new inquiry into the activities of Palestinian security agents in East Jerusalem.

There are signs of PLO police activity in Jerusalem, Mr. Shahal told Israel Radio. "I will not allow it and I have given orders to arrest any suspect."

"There will not be two security systems in Jerusalem," he vowed.

Palestinian preventive security police chief Jibril Rajub has allegedly started an operation in the Haram Al Sharaf complex.

It is common knowledge in Jerusalem that the Palestinians shun the Israeli police and now take their complaints to Mr. Rajub's agents.

Mr. Shahal also announced an inquiry in September after police admitted in court that

Palestinian agents were operating in the West Bank and in Jerusalem.

Three of Mr. Rajub's bodyguards were caught with a police siren and knives in their car in the city and were alleged to have kidnapped a Palestinian for questioning.

However the trio were released last week.

The Palestinian police meanwhile released about 30 Islamic Jihad supporters, leaving 120 suspects still in jail following the murder of three Israelis.

After Friday's suicide bombing of an army post on the Gaza Strip the police rounded up some 150 Palestinians, including AFP stringer Adil Zaun, 23, who remains in custody despite pledges to release him.

Islamic Jihad, which opposes the PLO's autonomy deal with Israel, claimed responsibility for the bombing at a Gaza City rally covered by Mr. Zaun for AFP.

The Palestinian National Authority has urged journalists not to report such murder claims from the Gaza Strip even though they have been made openly.

Berlusconi

(Continued from page 12)

designed to curb public spending. Labour Minister Clemente Mastella said after talks with union leaders that Mr. Berlusconi would meet them either next Wednesday or Thursday.

The climate is changing and we have until Dec. 2 to try to avert the general strike," he said.

Mr. Berlusconi said the government must stick to its plan to send a message to international financial markets that it was serious about cutting a \$100 billion deficit.

The government won a confidence vote in the chamber Monday night, 321-131, on a proposed amnesty on illegal construction expected to bring in \$3.3 billion from back taxes and fines.

But things won't be so easy when the budget plan reaches the senate. There, the coalition government of the federalist National League, right-wing National Alliance, and Mr. Berlusconi-formed Forza Italia falls short of a majority.

The budget must be passed by Dec. 31.

Algeria cracks down on press

(Continued from page 12)

pragmatic tendencies within the Islamist movement and to marginalise the most violent extremists," he argued.

Mr. Pellerre denied that the U.S. government is resigned to a victory by extremists in Algeria.

"Beyond the far-reaching consequences for Algeria itself, further gains by the most radical Islamists could embolden extremists in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco, countries upon which NATO has long relied as stabilising factors in the region," he said.

A crisis could provoke an influx of refugees into France and elsewhere in western Europe, the goal of U.S. policy in Algeria is to avoid such developments," he said.

Security forces meanwhile crushed on attempted prison breakout south of Algiers, killing at least 30 inmates and leaving 60 people injured, informed sources said.

Smoke billowed from the compound as security forces on Monday night stormed the prison where an estimated 3,000 detainees, 800 of them Muslim fundamentalists, were held, said the sources.

About 20 inmates began the uprising Sunday using knives, forks and other sharpened objects to attack the guards at the heavily guarded Berrouaghia prison south of the capital, said the sources.

One prisoner died in the first clash and the mutiny widened as most of the fundamentalist inmates, separated from the others, set fire to their beds.

Failing to halt the rebellion with tear-gas, security forces

moved in and killed at least 30 prisoners, the 60 injured included inmates and guards, the sources said.

South Korea said on Wednesday it was withdrawing its diplomats from Algeria because of the murder last month of a South Korean businessman and fears of a worsening political situation in the country.

"As of today, all three diplomats, including Ambassador Kwon (in-Hyuk), and their families are to be withdrawn from Algiers because of the danger of possible terrorist attacks," a Seoul foreign ministry official told Reuters.

"Israeli state sanctions torture"

(Continued from page 1)

ten days later he was rearrested and kept for 50 days. He now faces charges of belonging to a "gang" of stone-throwers and slogan painters when he was 14 and 15, something to which he finally confessed.

Dole well-placed to seek U.S. presidency

By William Scally
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The Republican takeover of the Senate propels the party's top elected official, senator Bob Dole, into the ideal spot to challenge Bill Clinton for the U.S. presidency in 1996.

Mr. Dole will resume the post of majority leader that he yielded when the Democrats regained control of the Senate in 1986.

It is a prospect guaranteed to cause tremors at the White House, given Mr. Dole's record as minority leader during the first two years of the Clinton presidency, when he was Mr. Clinton's sharpest critic.

But as Republicans gained the seven seats needed to win a Senate majority, Mr. Dole sounded a conciliatory note, saying Republicans were ready to work with Mr. Clinton.

"We intend to work with the president because we only have one president at a time," Mr. Dole said.

But Republicans are reading the election results as a rejection of Mr. Clinton's programmes and a vote for less government, and will be promoting their own programmes such as a balanced budget amendment and a rewrite of the crime bill passed in the last session.

Mr. Dole made clear two years ago that he would be a terrier snapping at Mr. Clinton's heels, relishing the role after acting as a loyal lieutenant for President George Bush.

"The good news (for Clinton) is that he's getting a honeymoon in Washington. The bad news is that Bob Dole is going to be his chaperon," he said on election night in 1992.

It was Mr. Dole who put the nail in the coffin of Mr. Clinton's \$16 billion economic stimulus plan. It was Mr. Dole who played a lead role in killing health care reform and who led a Republican filibuster offensive that blocked Clinton-supported

bills in the last days of the Congress.

And it was Mr. Dole who staked out a position as the party spokesman and Mr. Clinton's acerbic critic on Haiti and Bosnia.

Although conservative Dole is not on the party's far right, he has had to keep a wary eye on that wing led by Texan Phil Gramm, another potential presidential contender.

Mr. Dole was slow to endorse Oliver North, the darling of the right, in his unsuccessful race for the Virginia Senate seat held by Democrat Charles Robb, but later campaigned for him.

Mr. Dole, a trim and youthful-looking 71, has not said whether he plans to seek the Republican presidential nomination, but he has been acting like a person with White House ambitions.

His first shot at national office was in 1976 as the vice presidential candidate when President Gerald Ford lost to Jimmy Carter.

His so-called "mean streak" and sharp partisanship were in evidence in that race.

With typical mordant wit, he has joked of that campaign: "I was expected to go for the jugular. I did — my own."

He sought the party's presidential nomination in 1988 but lost to George Bush, bitter at what he saw as Mr. Bush's attacks on his character during the primary campaign.

Mr. Dole, who had surgery for prostate cancer in December, 1991, easily won a fifth Senate term from Kansas in 1992.

Badly wounded as an army lieutenant in Italy in World War II, Mr. Dole has a partially paralysed right arm and hand.

Mr. Dole was born on July 22, 1923, in the farming village of Russell, Kansas, one of four children of Doran and Bina Dole. He was elected to the Kansas legislature in 1951. He rose to the House of Representatives in 1960 and the Senate in 1968.

Dollar in demand after U.S. central bank delivers the goods

LONDON (R) — The dollar ran into strong demand from traders in European trading Wednesday after the United States Federal Reserve (Fed) delivered an interest rate rise Tuesday that satisfied all but the most bullish.

The 0.75 basis point increase in short-term rates was widely anticipated by a market that had come to expect a fairly substantial inflation-fighting rise after strong economic data earlier Tuesday.

Even so, the tightening could well set the scene for a gradual dollar upturn in the remaining weeks of this year, dealers said Wednesday.

At 1030 GMT the dollar was at 1.5544 marks compared with Tuesday's European close of 1.5455 and at \$8.60 yen compared with \$8.20 previously.

It had firmed since the start of the week in anticipation of an imminent Fed tightening and now stands 2 1/2 pence and one yen up from last Friday's European closing levels.

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) sanc-

tioned a 0.75 basis point rise in both the Fed funds target rate to 5.50 per cent and the discount rate to 4.75 per cent.

Following this year's seemingly inexorable decline in the dollar, many in the market now believe that the beleaguered currency has finally turned.

"This positive move from the Fed should underpin the dollar and the (U.S.) bond market for the rest of the year," said Robert Hayward, economic adviser at Bankamerica.

But much depended on the U.S. Treasury bond market. A sell-off there would hit the currency hard, analysts warned.

"We might see the high 1.50s in the mark and we may possibly get to see 100 on the dollar/yen but I don't see anything much higher than that this year," said Carlo Galazzi, foreign exchange manager at Nikko Bank in London.

Another Fed rise this year is seen as unlikely but analysts said by the beginning of next year the market

would start to look towards the next tightening.

"Once the market starts looking for another rise it puts a floor under the dollar," Mr. Galazzi said. "The big danger is the bond market, at this particular moment in time there is a big correlation between the treasury market and the dollar."

With the foreign exchange market eyeing bonds, much attention will be focused on forthcoming inflation data with Thursday's U.S. consumer price index (CPI) an important figure.

A 0.2 per cent rise in consumer price inflation is expected in October after a similar increase in September, with the ex-food and energy index seen rising 0.3 per cent.

Bankamerica's Hayward said such a rise would cause no problem but he also warned that the bond market could trip up the dollar.

"The major risk would be a sharp sell-off in the face of evidence that inflation is rising," he said.

The U.S. Federal Reserve

raised interest rates by three-quarters of a percentage point Tuesday in its boldest attack on inflation in 13 years.

The increase — the sixth this year — was bigger than widely expected and brought short-term interest rates to their highest level in about three years.

"The Federal Reserve views these actions as necessary to keep inflation contained, and thereby foster sustainable economic growth," the U.S. central bank said in a statement.

Commercial bank quickly matched the Fed move, raising their prime lending rates for businesses by three-quarters of a percentage point. Borrowing costs for credit card users and home owners with variable rate loans are also headed higher.

The three-quarter percentage point increase was the biggest since May 1981, when the Fed hiked the discount rate by a full point to 14 per cent. Annual inflation then was in double digits. It is now less than three per cent.

Analysts said the Fed may have been tempted into taking the bolder action by the Democratic Party's loss of control in both houses of Congress in elections last week. Democratic lawmakers have been sharply critical of the central bank.

The Clinton administration reacted calmly to the rate rise, with Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen saying it shared the same goals as the Fed — steady growth with low inflation.

"The news on the economy is good," Mr. Bentsen said in a statement. "The investment-led expansion continues, increasing employment and production. Inflation remains modest."

U.S. companies were not so restrained, hitting the rate hike as an unnecessary move that could bring about recession.

"The Fed is fundamentally misreading the American economy," said Jerry Jasnowski, president of the National Association of Manufacturers. "They ought to get out from behind their

desks and see what's really happening in plants and on factory floors across the country."

Wall Street analysts said that's what has the Fed worried. With U.S. factories operating at their highest levels in over a decade, it fears companies will be tempted to raise prices in the face of continued strong demand for their products.

Speaking to reporters before the rate rise, President Bill Clinton acknowledged the central bank was under pressure to act, but blamed it on moves in volatile currency markets.

"The pressure that it is under is because of world trading in currencies," Mr. Clinton told reporters in Jakarta at a meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders. "It's important to keep the proper balance to keep our currency stable."

Mr. Clinton stressed the importance of economic growth, saying he would do all he could to ensure the expansion continues. The dollar fell to a record

Gulf countries spend less on development — study

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf states need to spend far less than other countries to increase their oil production capacity although they control nearly two-thirds of the world's crude, a regional study said Wednesday.

Between 1993 and 2005, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf members of OPEC are expected to invest some \$78 billion in oil expansion projects, compared with worldwide investments of \$910 billion, said the study by Henry Azzam, chief economist at the National Commercial Bank, the biggest Saudi bank.

He attributed the smaller investments to the lower costs of oil production in the Gulf given the high flow rate. He estimated the rate at

4,000 barrels per day (b/d) per well, nearly 100 times the flow rate in the United States.

"Other factors include the large depth of the wells, their location, and the modern infrastructure," Mr. Azzam said in the study published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspaper Al Khaleej.

He attributed the smaller investments to the lower costs of oil production in the Gulf given the high flow rate. He estimated the rate at

EU auditor finds fraud throughout the union

STRASBOURG, France (Agencies) — Theft and misuse of European Union (EU) funds is rampant throughout the 12-nation block, an EU report found Tuesday.

"Fraud exists everywhere, there's no question of it just being something that happens in one country as opposed to another," EU audit chief Andre Middelhoeck told a news conference called to launch the report into the EU's 1993 budget.

He said it was impossible to guess how much money went astray from the 64.2 billion European Currency Units (\$78.96 billion) of EU funds paid out in 1993.

"If we knew the extent of the fraud then it would be much easier to solve the problem," Mr. Middelhoeck said, adding that insufficient data and monitoring prevented accurate estimates.

The 1993 audit tips around the issue of outright theft of EU money, referring instead to a series of cases where murky procedures provided opportunities for fraud and for contradictory actions.

The court noted for example that wine production in the EU had risen by one-fifth since 1989 despite EU spending totalling 1.2 billion European Currency Units (\$1.5 billion) to grub up vineyards.

As president of the EU's Court for Auditors, Mr. Middelhoeck must check EU spending but has no power to order the fining or imprisonment of fraudsters. He said simpler EU laws would help to stop abuses.

"We need a simplification of (EU) legislation, which is sometimes so complicated that it automatically leads to irregularities," Mr. Middelhoeck said.

Within the European Commission, the EU's executive, shortcomings cited in the report included poor internal checks, broken rules in awarding contracts, payments made by people not authorised to do so and acceptance of flawed project accounts.

EU Budget Commissioner Peter Schmidhuber, who Friday launched a telephone hotline for people to report cases of fraud to the commission, accepted the thrust of the report during a hearing before the European Parliament.

"The commission does not seek to deny... that very many individual points of management need further improvement," he said, adding that part of the problem was his organisation's increased workload.

The commission also issued a statement which said individual examples pulled from the report gave an incomplete picture of how money was spent.

Mr. Middelhoeck did not limit his criticism to Brussels bureaucrats.

"Eighty per cent of the European budget is actually spent in the member states (so) eighty per cent of the problems come within the remit of member states," he said.

Patrick Cox, an Irish member of the European Parliament, questioned whether

annual audit reports "made a blind bit of difference" to the way the EU spent its budget.

He said that just last month, EU ministers broke budget rules when they reduced fines against Italy and Spain for excess milk production.

"We discuss these things with rigour every year and at the end of the day, behind-closed-door dealing sees this kind of grubby arrangement made... these reports seem to make no difference," he said to applause from some of his colleagues.

The auditors singled out the case of EU funds under the PHARE programme still being used too often to finance maintenance costs or rent, whereas the funds should go to agriculture, environmental protection or job creation.

In the case of a programme for aiding Hungarian agriculture, the agency discovered that a consulting firm was commissioned to submit a study in the Hungarian government's name, and then to audit the deal in the name of the EU departments in charge.

The report also complains of work done to develop a former vacation village in Mecklenburg-Pomerania in Germany, with bungalows using some asbestos sheeting.

EU regional development funds were put into the project without requiring removal of the asbestos, which can cause cancer. Under health rules, the asbestos will have to be removed.

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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KLEAF
GELEY
RALCOR
TURAL

They sing so beautifully.

WHAT THE BIRDS GAVE THE NATURE LOVERS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above canon.

Answer here: A

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumble: TRILL EXUDE AFFRAID BODILY
Answer: What the landscaper uncovered in the royal garden — THE REAL DIRT

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY NOVEMBER 17, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Start this new week right by analyzing and studying all that is practical and make your changes accordingly so that you enjoy a greater amount of efficiency and productivity both at home and at work.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is not the day for worldly activities or interests but at the same time you can consider your personal aims and make progress in a plan to gain them.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Instead of seeking some new ways to have a more secure structure to your life make sure that you consult with a very up to date prominent person.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Instead of doing the same old things with your attachment try out some advanced and unique means by which to enjoy yourself this day.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't try to wear a partner by doing the same thing or make same plans over and over finding new ways to reduce joint venture to a success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't get involved in usual routine duties but you make the biggest progress by getting out in the world and drinking in fascinating outlets.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Make a point now to avoid entertainment activities for they would disappoint and get

Birthstone of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A brilliant day to use logical reasoning that is the result of Moon trine Mars and Jupiter and to enjoy an especially positive time with companions you like most. Keep the standards by which you were reared.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You find matters pertaining one or from a distance and disappointing while at the same time you see ways to get more respect in your community.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Communications are at the centre of your activities, those that have been long standing are difficult but new types of messages can be well handled.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your practical affairs that the spotlight even though it is Sunday but don't take up old issues now but get into more current obligations.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think about what you can do to bring your personal activities up to date and don't hold on so closely to outdated, worn out conditions.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A plan of action so you can get ahead does not seem to be working well so get together with persons who understand current means to operate with results.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Consider seriously the acquaintance you see today and are aware of what your personal longings actually are.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) Whatever your public interests today make sure that you approach them from a different slant, put them on a different plane, put them on a different level.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) Forget those old concerns and be off to places where you can get a lot of understanding of how to make your life more in tune with the times.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't get into or continue an argument with attachment that leads nowhere but consider your present financial condition to have all the best.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can have a difficult day if you allow yourself to dwell upon negative conditions but by organizing your efforts you can gain success.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't let a friend interfere in some good work you wish to do today but instead get off with a close attachment who cares for you, be happy.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Long time pleasures would not do for you what you wish and you would be wise to get in some interests that have more colour, beauty in them.

Birthstone of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

THE Daily Crossword by Harold S. Counts

ACROSS

1 Scotch
5 Enrune
10 Eject
14 Woodwind
15 Australian city
16 North or South

DOWN

1 Super
2 Lie next to
3 Heaps
4 Network
5 Card suit
6 Towel cloth
7 Church list of feast
8 Upon
9 the towel (given up)

10 Jet
11 Fiddler's
12 Famous fortress
13 Bridge seat
14 Musical instrument
15 Musical instrument
16 Musical instrument
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Financial Markets

In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.5720	1.5725**
Deutsche Mark	1.5558	1.5543
Swiss Franc	1.3101	1.3095**
French Franc	5.3425	5.3356**
Japanese Yen	98.75	98.62
European Currency Unit	1.2255	1.2263**

* USD Per STG
** European Opening on 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Source: 16/11/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.57	5.56	5.93	6.31
Sterling Pound	5.50	5.87	6.25	6.81
Deutsche Mark	4.75	5.00	5.06	5.43
Swiss Franc	3.43	3.68	3.87	4.31
French Franc	5.31	5.50	5.75	6.25
Japanese Yen	2.12	2.20	2.32	2.60
European Currency Unit	5.50	5.75	6.00	6.50

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Source: 16/11/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6990	0.7210
Sterling Pound	1.0997	1.1052
Deutsche Mark	0.4492	0.4514
Swiss Franc	0.5338	0.5365
French Franc	0.1309	0.1316
Japanese Yen	0.7080	0.7115
Dutch Guilder	0.4009	0.4029
Swedish Krona	0.0439	0.0441
Italian Lira	0.0439	0.0441
Belgian Franc	0.0439	0.0441

Other Currencies

Source: 16/11/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6370	1.8500
Lebanese Lira	0.041240	0.042680
Saudi Riyal	0.1851	0.1869
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3050	2.3650
Qatari Riyal	0.19080	0.19207
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7260	1.8180
UAE Dirham	0.1897	0.1906
Greek Drachma	0.2745	0.3115
Cypriot Pound	1.3980	1.4980

* Per 100

Bureaucracy behind delay in cut rates for cross-river calls

By Cathy King

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Construction of a microwave link on either side of the Jordan-Israeli border has facilitated direct telecommunications and with increased demand charge rates are falling, albeit quicker on the Israeli side.

Reports in the Arabic press this week said that new rates had already been applied by Israel's telecommunications company with a daytime rate of \$1.17 and \$0.90 night-time rate per minute (p/m) for calls made between Israel or the occupied territories and the Kingdom.

However, Jordan's revised rates (900 fils p/m for daytime calls and 630 fils p/m for

those made at night all day Fridays — about \$1.29 and \$0.90 respectively at current exchange rates) will not be applicable until early December.

According to TCC Acting Director General Walid Dweik, the current cost discrepancy should not be regarded as a problem.

"It is not a problem for 14 days and then we will be applying the same rates as the Israeli telecommunications company," he said. "We were not able to apply the new fees immediately on Oct. 26 (the day the Jordan-Israeli treaty was signed) because the decision, which required approval from TCC chairman of the board and minister of post and telecommunica-

tions, was not made until the beginning of November," Mr. Dweik told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

According to Mr. Dweik the TCC does not have computer capability to produce bills and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) processes them for the TCC.

The TCC and RSS have to coordinate for billing purposes so that rate changes may be written into the RSS computer programme.

"Our decision to reduce fees means the RSS has to alter its programme, which takes a little time," he added.

The microwave link which has enabled direct telecommunications between Jordan and the West Bank, Gaza and Israel was built after the Washington Declaration was issued on July 25.

The microwave link set up in Amman is the first of two. The second will be installed to link Aqaba and Eilat some time in the future, Mr. Dweik said.

"The direct (telecommunications) service is available to everyone with a telephone or fax, but some channels of the Aqaba-Eilat link will be reserved for leasing to businesses, banks, the media or anyone else who requests it," said Mr. Dweik.

Philadelphia Investment Bank raising capital to JD10 million

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Philadelphia Investment Bank, a relatively new entity in Jordan's banking, is raising its capital to JD10 million ahead of securing a license to operate as a full-fledged commercial bank, a senior official of the bank said Wednesday.

The bank is issuing 324,418 new shares to raise its present capital of JD9,673,582 in line with a Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) directive that all banking institutions in Jordan have a JD10 million capital as sought by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) based in Switzerland.

Complying with the BIS requirements is one of the preconditions for any bank to be treated at par with international banking standards — meaning in essence that

documents issued by the bank will be honoured internationally without additional guarantees as is the case with many banks in the Third World.

Abd Abdul Hafeez, a senior official of the Philadelphia Investment Bank, said the new issue would be limited to the present shareholders of the bank at a rate of three to every 100.

The new issue will be sold at JD1.5 each, raising JD489,627 million; JD489,627 million will be channelled to raising the capital to JD10 million since the net equity of shareholders stands at JD9,673,582 in paid-up capital as a result of a net loss of JD141,343 suffered since the bank began operations.

The value of the shares of the Philadelphia Investment Bank at the Amman Financial Market is around JD2.

The Philadelphia Investment Bank is a merged entity of the Darco Company for Investment and Housing and the Jordan Finance House for Development and Investment.

The merger was effected in 1992, and the Philadelphia Investment Bank was registered as an investment institution as of March 1, 1993.

Mr. Abdul Hafeez said the bank currently operates four branches and plans to open two others early next year.

Correction

Due to a typographic error, the Jordan Times said in a report on Al Dustour raising capital published in Wednesday's issue that the shares of the Jordan Press and Publishing Company had gone down to JD3.770. The figure should have read JD13.770. The Jordan Times regrets any inconvenience caused.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3638/48	Canadian dollar
	1.5546/56	Deutsche marks
	1.7422/32	Dutch guilders
	1.3074/84	Swiss francs
	31.970/1	Belgian francs
	5.3355/05	French francs
	1590.8/1.8	Italian lire
	98.56/66	Japanese yen
	7.4050/50	Swedish crowns
	6.8030/80	Norwegian crowns
	6.0740/90	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5740/50	
One ounce of gold	\$385.50/385.90	

U.S. seals \$40b in new Asia business

JAKARTA (R) — One day after signing onto grandiose free-trade plans, the United States and Indonesia clinched some concrete business Wednesday when they sealed more than \$40 billion in new contracts.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown presided over the signings — 17 deals in all — and touted them as proof of corporate America's new commitment to penetrating

booming East Asia.

"These project signings are diverse in nature but have one thing in common: they show marked progress for American exporters pursuing business opportunities in Indonesia," Mr. Brown said.

What we are here to celebrate are major commercial achievements.

Mr. Brown spoke one day after leaders from the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum pledged to liberalize trade in the region by 2020, a far-reaching vision whose full benefits will not trickle down for years.

In contrast, Wednesday's deals should quickly help the bottom line for a host of U.S. companies operating in sectors from energy to telecommunications to transportation.

The top deal, by far, was the long-awaited sealing of a natural gas project that Mr. Brown called "the largest project of its type in history."

Esso Indonesia, a unit of the U.S. energy giant Exxon Corp., agreed terms with Indonesia's state-run oil company for an off-shore gas project in which U.S. investment could total \$40 billion. Exxon called the accord "a major milestone."

The deal was fully 10 years in the making but is now expected to influence other foreign investors who are keen to tap into Asia's huge liquefied natural gas market.

Exxon Chairman Lee Raymond said the agreement "symbolizes the growth of the Asian energy market, as well as the opportunity to utilize advanced technology to serve that market. Exxon is pleased that its affiliate will be a participant and the operator in this historic undertaking."

The Natuna sea project would explore and exploit gas some 1,100 kilometres from Jakarta in the South China Sea.

Natuna is believed capable of supplying up to 20 million tonnes of gas annually, offering huge potential for Exxon. Gas demand is soaring in the region as Asian countries try to cut their dependence on oil imports and clean up the environment.

Indonesia, too, was keen to clinch the deal, since Jakarta is increasingly relying on its massive gas reserves to augment state revenues and offset falling oil production.

What is more, the signing not only built on Tuesday's regional free-trade commitment, but also added a sweetener to Wednesday's state visit here by President Bill Clinton.

"I can't say what impact the visit had on the government of Indonesia," said Exxon spokesman Edward Burwell. "We have been negotiating in good faith for a long time and this just happened to provide an opportunity."

While all the terms have been thrashed out, U.S. officials said the deal would only be finalised in January to take into account changes that are planned for Indonesia's tax code.

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Navratilova's retirement signals end of an era

NEW YORK (R) — The career of the greatest woman tennis player ever to pick up a racket ended Tuesday night when Gabriela Sabatini spoiled Martina Navratilova's Madison Square Garden retirement party with an overpowering first-round victory at the Virginia Slims Championships.

The air of electricity at the Garden was more fitting of a heavyweight title fight than a tennis match. But if the 38-year-old Navratilova took any inspiration from George Foreman's unlikely victory at 45, it did not translate into her strokes Tuesday.

On the blue carpet court where the once invincible Navratilova had won seven of her unrivalled 167 singles titles, she was simply outplayed by the 24-year-old Sabatini from beginning to end.

"I got blown off the court tonight by someone who was playing in the zone," said Navratilova of the 6-4, 6-2 defeat during an emotional ceremony honouring her long and illustrious career.

"I will miss this game, but I'm ready for my new life," she said.

"I'll see what's really close to my heart and make sure whatever I get involved in that I can make a difference," she said, citing gay rights, women's rights and environmental issues as causes she will have more time to champion.

That she made a difference in tennis is an understatement.

The 38-year-old left-hander is one of those rare athletes who forever changed their sport.

"She brought women's tennis to another level," said Jana Novotna of her former countrywoman.

Navratilova was the first female tennis player to pump iron, becoming an imposing physical specimen. She took what was often a game of long, boring baseline rallies and introduced attacking serve and volley play to

women's tennis — a style she continually perfected.

"My dream was to be the best tennis player in the world. I made that commitment when I was eight years old."

"Never did I imagine it would take me as far as it did. I thought it would be a good way to get out of the country and see the world and hopefully win Wimbledon one day," said the Prague-born Navratilova, who defected to the United States in 1975, later becoming a U.S. citizen.

She realised the Wimbledon dream an unprecedented nine times and, amazingly, nearly made it 10 when she reached the final this year at the age of 37.

The sheer numbers are staggering.

More important than the numbers, however, is just how much Navratilova influenced and inspired a generation of athletes who followed her.

"When I started to play tennis, I used to look at Martina a lot," said Sabatini.

"She gave a lot to the sport," said current number one Steffi Graf. "She was always there with her whole heart. She was always special to me."

Navratilova also gave the sports world one of its greatest and most prolific rivalries. Without a doubt, the Navratilova-Evert rivalry ranks with Ali-Frazier, Bird and Magic, Nicklaus-Palmer and Borg-McEnroe.

"Physically, I could still play," Navratilova said of her decision to retire after 22 years of top-level competition. "But my heart is tired."

The emotional Navratilova, known for wearing her heart on her sleeve, came out for the tribute carrying a box of tissues. But she kept herself together beautifully, never shedding a tear throughout the half-hour ceremony.

There were tears in the stands, however as friends and admirers watched a banner bearing Navratilova's name raised to the rafters alongside those honouring New York's basketball and hockey heroes. Nobody from any other sport and no woman athlete has ever been so honoured at the famous arena.

Navratilova was also presented with a very snazzy Harley Davidson motorcycle by Virginia Slims tennis that had the legendary left-hander literally jumping for joy.

The always classy, always articulate champion thanked her coach Craig Kardon, whom she called her best friend and Billie Jean King "without whom none of us would be here," and she brought her parents out onto the court to introduce them to all her "friends" at the Garden.

"If I had to play my last match I'd rather lose to Gabriela Sabatini than anybody else because she's a very, very nice human being as well as a hell of a tennis player," said the nine-time Wimbledon champion.

Navratilova, who had reached 12 finals in 16 previous appearances at the New York season finale, was greeted by a thunderous standing ovation when she first came out on court, and every winner by Navratilova brought another wave of encouragement from the partisan crowd.

But the winners were too



Martina Navratilova

few and far between. There was to be no fairy tale ending, even though it has surely been a dream come true of a life for Navratilova, winner of 18 grand slam singles titles.

"It's been a wonderful life in tennis with so many wonderful memories," said Navratilova.

Tuesday's match will also be a special memory for Sabatini, who took full advantage of her opponent's 38-year-old legs.

Sabatini said she apologised during the hug to which Navratilova responded: "If you play like that, you can beat everybody."

"On the one side I didn't want to be the one to beat her," Sabatini admitted. "But it was a great honour for me to play Martina in her last match."

Earlier, fourth-seeded

Czech Jana Novotna warmed up the expectant crowd by extending her match winning streak to 16 with a 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 victory over 17-year-old Croatian Iva Majoli.

World number one Steffi Graf followed Navratilova-Sabatini with a 7-5, 6-3 victory over first-time qualifier Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands.

The three-time champion showed title sign of the back problem that has kept her sidelined since the U.S. Open in the 70-minute contest.

The first round concludes with three singles matches as Mary Pierce plays Amanda Coetzer with the winner to face Graf, Lindsay Davenport takes on Anke Huber, and Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez faces Natalia Zvereva.

Jordan Cup

Faisali play Al Yarmouk, Fuheis take on Wihdat today

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Sixteen teams have made it to the second round of the Jordan Cup, the Kingdom's fourth annual soccer competition currently underway alongside the First Division Soccer Championship.

The 28 teams representing first and second division clubs have been divided into two groups. Results in the Group 1 came as follows: Wihdat-Qoqazi 3-0; Hussein-Sahem 3-0; Russeifa-Zarqa 3-2; Jazireh-Salt 5-2; Fuheis-Karmel 3-0; Yarmouk-Sarih 4-1. Al Qadissieh and Al Faisali got first round byes.

In Group 2, it was Ahli-Baqaa 1-0; Ein Karim-Abbasi 5-4; Shabab Al Hussein-Ittihad Al Ramtha 8-0; Kufroum-Jalil 1-0; Arabi-Awdeh 2-0; Jeel-Ja'far Al Tayyar 4-2; Al Ramtha and Sahab got first round byes.

The second round of the knockout competition kicks off Thursday with the clash of Group 1 qualifiers.

Al Fuheis take on Al Wihdat; titleholders Al

Faisali meet Al Yarmouk; Al Jazireh face Al Qadissieh while Al Hussein play Al Russeifa.

On Friday Group 2 qualifiers meet: Al Ramtha play Ein Karim; Al Ahli face Shabab Al Hussein; Al Arabi meet Al Jeel; and Kufroum play Sahab.

The top two teams in each group will play a semifinal two leg round to determine the teams that will advance to the final match.

The Jordan Cup is the second most important soccer title in addition to the First Division, the Cup Winner's Cup and the Federal Shield.

Al Faisali are aiming to win their record eighth Jordan Cup title.

Only five teams have won the title since the competition was initiated in 1980: Al Faisali have clinched the title seven times, Al Wihdat three times, Al Ramtha twice, and Al Jazireh and Al Arabi once each.

Al Faisali, Al Wihdat, Al Hussein and Al Ramtha are all strong contenders for the title.

Although Al Faisali, who

have won the 1st division title for the past two years, have had an inconsistent form this season, they still group the Kingdom's top players and are very keen to add another title to their long list of achievements in all competitions.

They are currently third in the First Division after Al Wihdat and Al Hussein.

In 1993, Al Faisali clinched the First Division, the Jordan Cup and the Cup Winner's Cup, and in 1992 they won the Jordan Cup, the Shield and the First Division.

Al Hussein who had not captured a title for years, won their first ever major title this year when they defeated Al Faisali to win the 1994 Federation Shield. Their only other best achievement was finishing second in the first division in 1990 and 1992.

Al Wihdat's last major title was the Cup Winner's Cup in 1992. They last won the 1st division in 1991.

Al Ramtha won the Jordan Cup in 1990 and 1991 and last won the Federation Shield in 1993.

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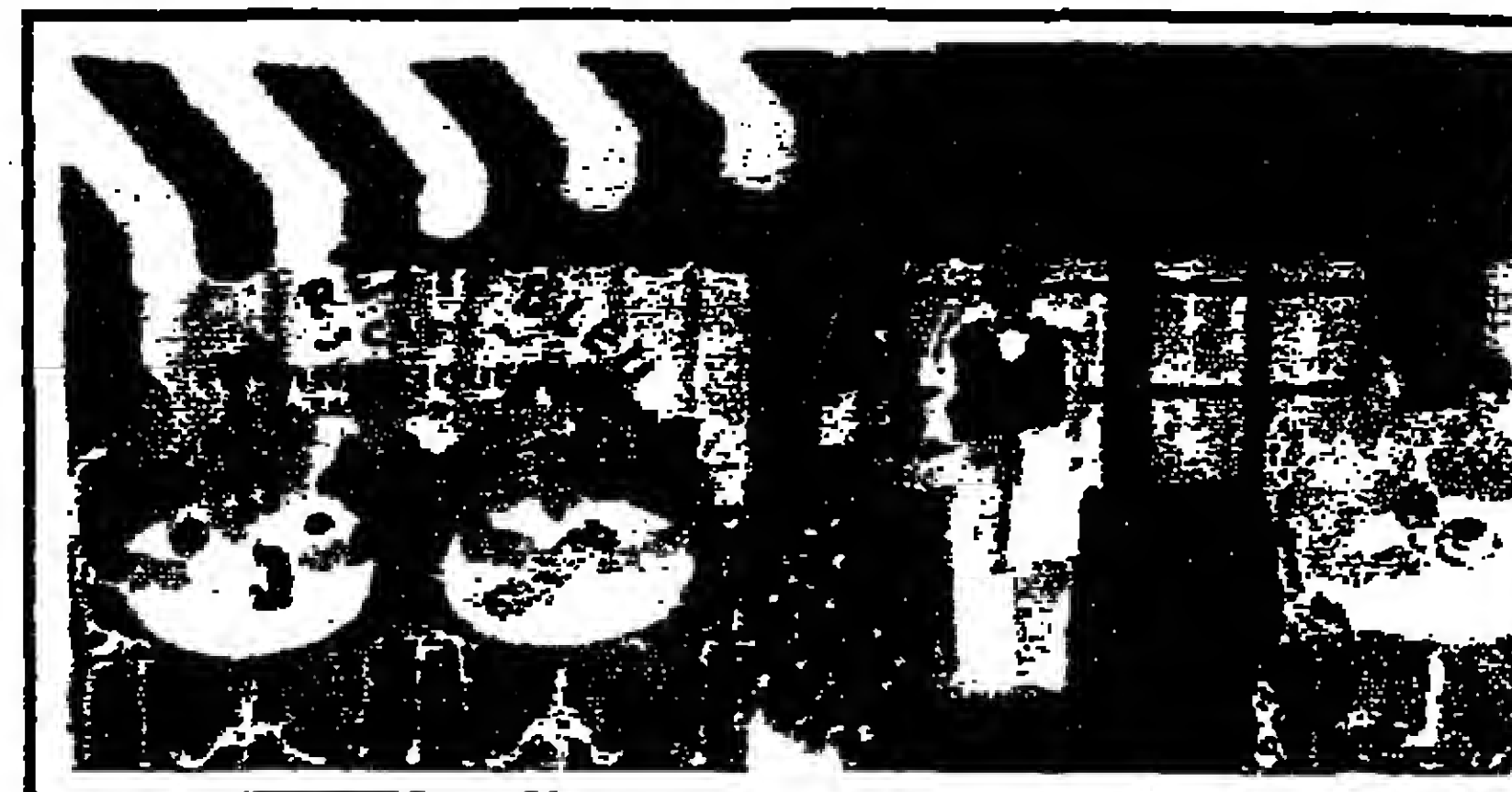


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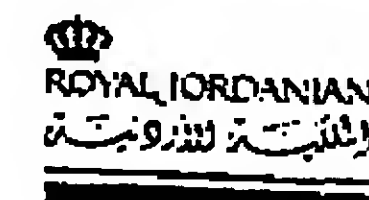
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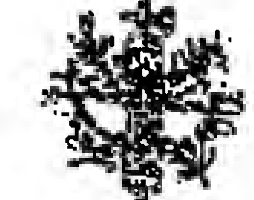
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Algeria press under sweep

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algeria's military-backed government, which is fighting an armed Islamic insurrection, on Wednesday seized copies of two major newspapers as it pursued a crackdown on the press.

Security officials seized El Khabar, Algeria's biggest daily in Arabic, and El Hiwar, the paper of the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN), the newspapers' editors said.

No reasons were given for the move, but the government has recently warned journalists that it will crack down on media seen as breaching security or abetting the Islamic extremists waging a guerrilla war on the regime.

The editor of El Khabar, Omar Ourtilane, told AFP that security officials had stopped the presses in Algiers after 25,000 copies had been printed and also seized copies at Oran in the west and Constantine in the east.

The government gave him no explanation for preventing distribution of the independent newspaper, which has a circulation of 130,000. Mr. Ourtilane said. No comment was immediately available from the authorities.

The seizure followed the suspension of publication of three other papers by the regime in the past eight days. El Hiwar's editor, Abdelkhamid Abdous, also said security officials raided its printshop overnight and took away all the pages of the newspaper which were ready for printing.

Journalists were working on Thursday's edition as normal, Mr. Abdous said, but he had no idea whether it would be published.

The war began after the army cancelled the second round of general elections in January 1992 when it became clear that the new outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised overwhelmingly to defeat the FLN, formerly the sole party which governed Algeria with the military.

The media is also under constant pressure from the Islamists.

No fewer than eighteen

Algerian journalists have been assassinated in terror attacks generally blamed on the extremists since the conflict started.

A senior State Department official said in Washington Tuesday that the United States does not believe there is a military solution to Algeria's problems and is concerned over the "excesses by government security forces."

"Indications of growing influence of hardliners in the military leadership... raise questions about the viability of any election which the regime might organise in 1995," Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau said.

While condemning mounting violence by Algeria's radical Islamic groups, Mr. Pelletreau said the U.S. government was also "disturbed by reports of extra-judicial killings, torture and detention without trial," carried out by security forces.

He called on Algeria to take "concrete steps to establish a dialogue with opposition elements, secular and Islamist, willing to work toward a non-violent solution to Algeria's crisis."

The U.S. official also condemned a target by Algerian President Liamine Zeroual to step up military activities against Muslim extremists.

Mr. Pelletreau said the president had harshly denounced both Muslim and secular opposition leaders in a speech at the end of October.

"Zeroual's speech comes amid other indications of growing influence of hard-line military leaders who reject compromise with the opposition and intend to step up efforts to crush the armed insurgency by force," he added.

Mr. Pelletreau said the U.S. government favours conversations between the government and the opposition, both religious and secular.

"Such a strategy offers the best chance to reinforce

(Continued on page 7)

Berlusconi wins vote

ROME (Agencies) — Premier Silvio Berlusconi won a key victory Wednesday in his battle against Italy's huge deficit when the chamber of deputies approved pension cuts put to a confidence vote.

The measure, by a vote of 346 to 208, passed with the backing of conservative coalition's sometimes troublesome ally, the Northern League, which still wants the government to begin negotiations with the unions. A second confidence vote Wednesday on more pension reform was expected late in the evening.

Mr. Berlusconi warned that he will call early elections if he cannot carry through his government programme.

The warning came after he survived the vote of confidence.

"I have told the voters that I took over the government to carry out a government programme," he told journalists.

"If I cannot do this, I will call new elections and will not be worn and torn by government work that does not achieve anything."

Article 10 which would raise the age for retirement and slash pensions for semi-retired people was voted by 346 deputies while 208 rejected it and one deputy abstained.

Parliamentary debate was resumed over another article and a second vote of confidence was expected for late Wednesday, which he was expected to win with his 51-seat majority.

The Northern League, a member of Mr. Berlusconi's rightwing coalition, had said it would vote in favour to stop the government falling, even though it opposed proposed pension cuts.

Latest opinion polls showed the League would have nothing to gain from an early general election as its support has sunk from 8.5 to 4.0 per cent since elections last March.

Trade unions, which mobilised a million people against the pension reform in Rome last weekend, meanwhile called a general strike on Dec. 2 to protest the plan which Mr. Berlusconi sees as the centre-piece of a budget

(Continued on page 7)



IMPERIAL CROWN: The Imperial State Crown is carried from the Houses of Parliament after it had been worn by

Britain's Queen Elizabeth for the annual state opening of parliament on Wednesday (AFP photo)

IAEA want to send team to Pyongyang

VIENNA (AFP) — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Wednesday offered to send a team of inspectors to North Korea "as soon as possible" to control the "freezing" of Pyongyang's controversial nuclear reactors, the IAEA said.

IAEA officials met the North Korean ambassador to Vienna, Kim Gwang Sop, Wednesday to discuss the conditions under which the agency would be able to verify the freezing process, the IAEA said in a statement.

IAEA spokesman Hans-Friedrich Meyer initially refused to say whether the North Korea had invited the IAEA to send a team of inspectors to Pyongyang.

Mr. Meyer said later the North Korean ambassador had merely acknowledged the proposal and said he would communicate it to his government.

North Korea agreed in talks with Washington last month to freeze its five controversial nuclear reactors.

Critics of peace treaty fail to suggest alternatives

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "They reject, they oppose, but they never propose," says Ahmad of Jordan's opposition parties.

Ahmad, a taxi driver, and many ordinary Jordanians are not jubilant over the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26. But, having no alternative, they half-heartedly accept it, observers say.

Jordan, a small country without much natural resources, cannot afford the luxury of entertaining opposition for the sake of idle rejection, especially when peace-making with the Jewish state promises economic reform and prosperity.

Regional and international communities are now taking interest in the not long ago isolated Kingdom. Many business owners are planning to invest in the strategic country which provides a link to other resourceful areas in the region.

Such projects are bound to at least decrease the rising 20 per cent unemployment rate in the Kingdom, and this awaited financial prosperity is one important reason for accepting an agreement which some view as "the best among a number of bad choices," in the words of a former minister of justice, Taher Hikmat.

Despite their harsh criticism of the treaty which ended a 46-year state of war between Jordan and Israel, the opposition has failed to rally public opinion against it for its lack of pragmatism.

The Islamic Action Front (IAF) spokesman, Deputy Hamzeh Mansour, says that now the treaty has become an irreversible reality, the opposition has to deal with the accord in a different approach—meaning opponents will concentrate their opposition on rejecting normalising ties with the Jewish state.

"I have children to feed and educate, and if the price for doing that is putting my

emotional feelings aside, then I will do it," says Abu-Khalid, a waiter at one of Amman's restaurants.

The opposition, which charges Jordan with giving in to "Zionist designs for dominating the region," has not proposed a strategy for preserving the Kingdom, which, during the Gulf crisis, was threatened with political and economic starvation.

For its perceived sympathy with Iraq during the Gulf crisis, Jordan was boycotted by the Gulf states, the U.S. and many European states, which were the Kingdom's economic safety valves.

Jordan's peace moves were accompanied with restoring relations with the states that for tens of years have contributed to the Kingdom's economic stability, something that the opposition cannot deny, according to the Lower House's president of the Financial Committee, Ali Abul Ragheb.

"They (the opposition) are asking us not to accept life jackets but are not offering us any life lines instead," says Ghada Ahmad, a secretary, when asked how she viewed opponents of the peace accord.

Despite their harsh criticism of the treaty which ended a 46-year state of war between Jordan and Israel, the opposition has failed to rally public opinion against it for its lack of pragmatism.

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Mubarak sees 'new Afghanistan' without aid to Palestinians

CAIRO (AP) — President Hosni Mubarak predicted Wednesday that Gaza and the West Bank could turn into "a new, tougher Afghanistan" unless international aid quickly reaches the autonomous Palestinian territories.

In an interview with the Associated Press Mr. Mubarak also said the violence would spread to Europe if the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank "don't start feeling the results of peace."

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat told the AP on Tuesday that only a trickle — about six per cent of the \$690 million promised by donors for the year starting in May had been received so far.

Mr. Mubarak said the \$2.4 billion in aid pledged overall to the Palestinians is "nonsense when you compare it with the money spent" in the Middle East in nearly 50 years of warfare.

In other comments Mr. Mubarak said it is not yet time to lift U.N. sanctions on Iraq and said that most Arab leaders do not trust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

He expressed hope that peace between Israel and Syria will be reached by June of next year, and said so-called Islamic fundamentalists "have no idea about" Islam and use it as an excuse for common crime.

Mr. Mubarak said delays in aid to Palestinians made the West Bank and Gaza "fertile ground for Hamas and the

Jihad," two of the main Islamic groups.

Speaking in an ornate reception room of the Ittihadiah palace, Mr. Mubarak blamed bureaucracy by Western donor nations for the delay in aid to the Palestinians.

He said that if lack of aid prevents development in the Palestinian-controlled Gaza Strip and West Bank "it will be a failure to the whole (peace) process in the Middle East."

"Terrorism will be violent, it will be tough, Palestine will be a new, tougher Afghanistan," he said. "The whole area, including the Europeans, the Arabs, everyone will be affected."

Mr. Mubarak said that President Hafez Al Assad of Syria "wants to conclude a peace agreement" but that Mr. Assad must lay the groundwork for peace since "even in Syria, public opinion counts."

"I hope something could be concluded before June next year," he said, "before the campaigns for the elections in Israel and the United States."

"I think they will," he added.

In discussing Iraq, Mr. Mubarak said the Iraqi people were the main victims of economic sanctions and said "we have to find a way or a formula to help the people...they are suffering, they are crying, we should find relief for them."

But he added the time was

not right for lifting the sanctions until Iraq implements all U.N. Security Council demands that grew out of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

"Just promises or signatures or papers are not sufficient," he said, referring to Iraq's statement last week recognising the borders of Kuwait.

"The Gulf countries and other Arabs don't trust Saddam. They will never believe him," he said. He added, "however, that most Arab states did not want to see Iraq fall apart because that would level Iraq as the main power in the Gulf."

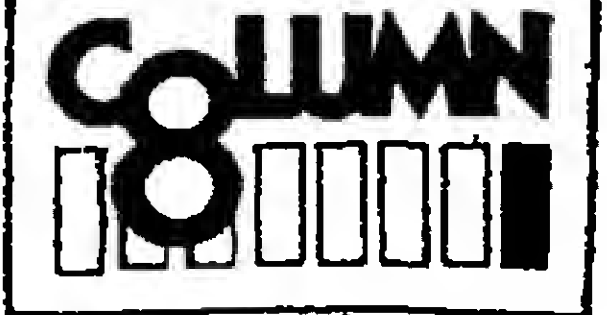
He stopped short of calling for President Saddam's overthrow, saying that was a decision for the Iraqi people.

"It is the will of the people," he said, "if the will of the people is that Saddam will stay and they keep suffering, it's their way."

Mr. Mubarak said Egyptian fundamentalists are being funded from abroad. He said rich Iranian businessmen were among those supplying money. He also said funds for Islamic causes are being collected in mosques in the United States.

He said terrorists use Islam as "an excuse" because "it is a very good source to collect money."

He said: "Those who are committing crimes have no idea about Islam...some of them have never prayed."



Israeli gatecrash Amman wedding

AMMAN (AFP) — A group of Israeli tourists gatecrashed a wedding in a hotel of the Jordanian capital, almost causing a scuffle, the newspaper Al Aswak reported Wednesday. The tourists were only noticed as they took to the dancefloor and the singer at the party welcomed them over a microphone, the paper said. Other guests started protesting and a scuffle almost broke out. Israeli tourists started arriving in Jordan Sunday, following the Oct. 26 peace treaty to end more than 40 years of hostility between the two states.

Filipino diplomat loses job after being manhandled

MANILA (R) — A Filipino diplomat who was manhandled by a Saudi police officer is being removed from his post, the Philippine Foreign Office said Wednesday. Anacleto Lacanilao, the consul in Jeddah since 1991, can no longer deal effectively with the Saudi government after last month's incident became public knowledge, a foreign affairs official said. The government protested to Saudi Arabia on Oct. 22 over the policeman's action but there has been no response. "The Saudi authorities usually don't respond to protests of this kind," the official said. The diplomat was manhandled by the policeman at Jeddah Airport shortly after a visit to the kingdom by Philippine President Fidel Ramos.

Teacher rapped for trampling on Christ image

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese teacher has been admonished by his local education authority for telling students to stamp on a picture of Jesus during lessons about the religious repression of Christians. A local government spokesman said Wednesday that the teacher asked his students to trample on the photocopied image to illustrate how Christians suffered under Japan's pro-Buddhist Tokugawa Shogunate in the 1600s. Acting out a practice used by the Tokugawa government to identify Christians, the unnamed history teacher from Jojo High School in Kyoto, central Japan, told his 13- to 14-year-old students to tread on the crucifixion picture or face religious persecution. One Christian student later complained she was deeply hurt by the role-play and the teacher apologised to her. The local education board told the teacher he lacked consideration about religious freedom and told him never to repeat the offending lesson. The Tokugawa government regarded Christians as a threat to national unity. Buddhism is the predominant religion in modern-day Japan but the country also has a large Christian minority.

'Nairobi drowns in garbage'

NAIROBI (AFP) — Nairobi is drowning in garbage, a leading Kenyan newspaper said here Tuesday. "Garbage, garbage everywhere and not a council cleaner in sight," the independent daily The Standard said above a leading article on the subject. Nairobi, once known as the Green City in the Sun, is now known for its "streets of shame," the paper said. From those streets, one photograph showed a man struggling to cross a rubbish mound, festering in a muddy city alleyway. Another showed a child sitting on a pile of rubbish reaching almost up to roof level in between shanty town huts. A further photograph shows a child pulling up his trouser legs to avoid them dragging in a pool of filthy, stagnant water.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Three stoned to death in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Three people, including a woman, have been stoned to death in northern Iran for murder, rape and adultery, Abar newspaper reported Wednesday. The two men, aged 30 and 44, were accused of kidnapping and raping a woman after drugging her in the city of Sari in Mazandaran province, it said. Another woman, identified as a 32-year-old Moharram, was convicted in a Sari court of adultery and of killing her seven-year-old daughter after she found out about her mother's "illegitimate relationship." The sentences were carried out on Juibar road in Sari, the daily added.

First Israeli minister to visit S. Korea

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Communications and Science Minister Shulamit Aloni begins Thursday an Asian tour to sign accords in South Korea, where she will be the first Israeli minister to visit, China and India, officials said. Ms. Aloni, who set off Wednesday, was to stop in Seoul to sign a scientific cooperation accord. She was to seal telecommunications deals in Beijing and then New Delhi. The leader of the left-wing Meretz party goes to China on Sunday and wraps up the tour in India where she arrives on Nov. 26 for five days.

'Saudi gems' trickle in after police request

BANGKOK (AFP) — Jewellery that some people believe once belonged to a Saudi prince has begun to trickle in to Thai police stations, with three diamond-studded wristwatches arriving Wednesday, a police official said. The police have reclaimed at least seven pieces of the missing jewels since last week when they asked people to return them anonymously. Last Friday, two pairs of earrings, two rings and a bracelet, all gold with diamond studs, were found on the edge of Bangkok along the highway to the beach resort of Pattaya, a police official told AFP. Experts authenticated those items and put their total value at 250,000 baht (\$10,000). Police plan to ask Saudi embassy officials here to determine if they are part of the missing Saudi gems.

U.N. urges speeding up Sahara referendum

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The U.N. Security Council has voiced concern over the slow pace of the identification process of potential voters in Western Sahara's referendum for self-determination. In a presidential statement unanimously approved Tuesday, the 15-member council called on Rabat and the Polisario Front, the Western Sahara independence movement, to cooperate fully with the United Nations in order to speed up the process. The council, however, recognised the difficulties involved, "including the handling of a large number of last-minute applications" to register for the referendum in the disputed former Spanish colony.

Mideast combat aircraft purchases decline

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Middle East and North African countries will be key consumers of combat aircraft in coming years but the drop in their purchases that began in the 1980s is continuing, a study released Tuesday said. "The end of east-west competition in the region and recent moves toward a comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbours have greatly diminished the reasons for competitive arming," the study by the Institute for Defence and Disarmament Studies said. "And while the United States continues to provide significant military assistance to Israel and Egypt, Russia can no longer offer generous terms to the former allies of the Soviet Union," it said.

Iranian lawsuit dismissed in U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — An effort by Iran's government to collect \$3 billion from the late Shah's sister has been turned away by supreme court. The court, without comment, rejected an appeal aimed at reviving Iran's lawsuit in California courts against Shams Pahlavi, sister of the former Shah. The 1981 lawsuit alleged that the Pahlavi family embezzled \$3 billion from the Iranian government, and that some of the money was used to purchase and furnish a home in Beverly Hills and two condominiums in Los Angeles. Ms. Pahlavi lives in Los Angeles.

Lebanon denies reviving bombing probe

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's chief prosecutor, denied on Wednesday that authorities had revived investigations into the 1983 suicide bombings of the headquarters of the U.S. Marines and French paratroopers in Beirut. Judge Munif Oweidat described a recent transfer of the case file as a routine handover to a new judge. "All that there is to it is that the case changed hands from one judge to another," Mr. Oweidat told reporters. "There is nothing in the file that makes it mandatory to proceed... because the perpetrator is not known and there is nothing in the investigation that indicates the side that did it." Investigations have made no progress in the two bombings which killed 241 Americans and 58 Frenchmen but the case file was never completely closed.

Cypriots protest Turkish occupation

NICOSIA (AP) — Greek Cypriot students clashed with policemen and U.N. soldiers who blocked their attempt Wednesday to cross into a Turkish-occupied enclave to protest the detention of five of their peers the day before. Waving Greek and Cypriot flags, demonstrators thronged to the 180-kilometre-long green line that splits the island into Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot sectors. The largest gathering was in Nicosia. Rejecting police orders to stop, thousands of students pushed through barbed wire barricades into a buffer zone patrolled by United Nations troops. They overpowered the peacekeepers, overran their observation post and smashed its windows. Then they replaced the U.N. flag with a Greek one. Scuffles ensued as Cypriot policemen and the peacekeepers teamed up to push the demonstrators back. The students finally dispersed two hours later after the international peacekeepers fired teargas at them.

German president to visit Israel on Dec. 6

BONN (AFP) — German President Roman Herzog said Wednesday he would visit Israel on Dec. 6 following an invitation by Israeli President Ezer Weizman. On his first visit to Israel since becoming president in July, Mr. Herzog will meet Mr. Weizman, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and members of the opposition. He did not say how long the visit would last.

Documentary on Lockerbie to be shown in Glasgow

LONDON (AFP) — A movie that exonerates Libya from being involved in the Lockerbie bombing will be screened in Scotland Thursday after being banned from the London Film Festival on legal grounds, the Scotsman reported Wednesday. The film, entitled "The Maltese Double Cross" and financed in part by Libya, was made by American director Allan Francovich. It raises questions about U.S. and British claims that Tripoli was responsible for the downing of the Pan Am flight which exploded over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988 killing all 270 people on board.